

Brazil is the winner!

LOS ANGELES (Agencies) — Brazil won a record fourth World Cup title when they beat Italy 3-2 in a penalty shoot-out after the two sides were tied 0-0 after extra-time in the final here on Sunday afternoon. Brazilian captain Dunga ended up getting the winning goal. Italy could have tied the shoot-out with their last attempt but Roberto Baggio shot over the bar. It was Brazil's first victory since 1970. Baggio missed the penalty that secured Brazil's triumph. Both sides carried out a handful of chances in regulation time — but Brazil were marginally the more superior up front. The deadlock was almost broken by Brazil in the 75th minute when Italian Gianluca Pagliuca fumbled a long-range shot by Mauro Silva. The ball bounced out of his hands and hit a post before the goalkeeper gratefully caught it. Brazil had another great chance early in extra time but Bebeto failed to control the ball in time for a snap shot. Ronaldo was then at fault with the goal at his mercy.

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Jordan, Israel open talks today in southern desert

Kingdom going ahead in peace process with clear vision of objectives — spokesman

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter
with agency dispatches

JORDAN AND Israel open their first bilateral talks in the region today in a tent camp in the southern desert in what is expected to be the first step in addressing the Kingdom's demand for the return of its territory and water rights.

The talks, which were moved to the region by mutual agreement in June, come ahead of a landmark meeting between His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin noted by U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington on July 25.

The two key issues on the table in the air-conditioned tent-camp in undisputed territory some 13 kilometres north of the Red Sea are Jordan's demand for the re-

turn of more than 380 square kilometres of its territory and Israel's respect for the Kingdom's right for a fair share of water resources in the north.

During last-minute preparatory talks on Sunday, the Israeli side agreed to hold a second session of meetings on Tuesday after two working sessions shortly following the opening of the negotiations on Monday at 10 p.m., said Marwan Muasher, spokesman for the Kingdom's delegation.

The key task of the meetings is to set up three committees to continue negotiations on border demarcation, security and water and environment issues.

Dr. Muasher told reporters at Amman that the King's meeting with Mr. Rabin was designed to push the peace process and was not aimed at working out any new

mechanism.

"His Majesty's meeting (with Mr. Rabin) does not represent a parallel line to the Jordanian-Israeli talks," Dr. Muasher said. "Nor does it constitute a departure from the Israeli-Jordanian agenda for peace talks" signed in September in Washington, he added.

The return of its territorial and water rights are very important for Jordan, the spokesman said, pointing out that it is impossible to plan regional development "without knowing where our borders are."

Once the borders are delineated on the basis of 1928 maps drawn up by the British mandate authorities which set out the boundaries of the emirate of Transjordan, then security arrangements could

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Majali to meet Peres after trilateral talks

From Nermeen Murad in Amman

PRIME MINISTER Abdul Salam Majali and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will hold a bilateral meeting at the Dead Sea Hotel on July 20, Marwan Muasher, spokesman of the Jordanian delegation, said Sunday.

The surprise meeting will come after a trilateral meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher ends and Mr. Christopher leaves the site of talks which will concentrate on economic cooperation.

The trilateral talks at the Dead Sea will open at 11:00 a.m. on July 20 with a meeting among experts of the three countries followed by the meeting at foreign ministers level at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Peres will arrive by helicopter at a landing pad near the Dead Sea Hotel and will be escorted by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan by car to the site of negotiations.

Thirty experts from the Israeli side will meet with their Jordanian and American counterparts on the morning of the first of two days of trilateral.

At 3:00 p.m. the foreign ministers of U.S., Israel and Jordan will go into a private meeting which will be attended by two additional delegates from each side and a notetaker. Joining Premier Majali will be Dr. Faysal Tarawneh and Munther Haddadin and Omar Rifai will be taking notes.

This will be followed by a joint press conference by the three heads of delegations which will be carried live by Jordan Television and Israeli Television.

The opening session of the trilateral, during which all three foreign ministers will give opening statements, will be held at 2:10 p.m. and will end at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Peres said the launch of peace negotiations with Jordan would mark an end to more than 45 years of a state of war between the two neighbours.

"The era of war with Jordan is over," Mr. Peres told reporters at the Israeli foreign ministry on Sunday.

"I think we are opening an entirely new situation. This is an initiative for a new future for all the people."

King voices deep appreciation of negotiators, asks government to provide them with all facilities

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday expressed deep appreciation of the government's efforts in the ongoing peace process and urged the executive authority to provide the Jordanian negotiators with all facilities to make their task achieve success.

In a message he sent to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, the King stressed that all efforts should be pooled to ensure the restoration of Jordan's lands and water rights.

Following is the King's message:

"I am pleased to send you my deep appreciation and greetings as I follow up your good efforts and your preparations with the help of an elite of Jordanian citizens for the new round of the peace battle which we have waged with the will and support of all the Jordanian people in defence of the highest national interests and in pursuit of the implementation of international legitimacy with the aim of regaining the usurped Arab rights."

"As you enter the final stage of preparations, mobilising all potentials, represented in Jordanian experts



from various organisations in Jordan, I wish to express to all members of the negotiating team and the teams to take part in the later stages of the negotiations my deepest appreciation and confidence in all of them.

"These teams are shouldering a national duty with high efficiency and are assuming the role of defending Jordan's rights in land and water at all levels."

"All of you have served as faithful soldiers for the homeland, exercising and implementing the people's will."

negotiations close to the occupied lands, you will be expressing Jordan's determination to ensure the protection of the homeland and to safeguard Jordan's sovereignty, security and a better future for the coming generations. You are seeking a just, durable and comprehensive peace acceptable to the coming generations.

"As we have taken the decision to pursue the peace process, we have to mobilise for this process all potentials and resources and to provide the Jordanian negotiators with whatever they need of assistance to ensure their success in their mission. We deeply appreciate the negotiating team's efforts which aim at helping Jordan to remain free."

Meanwhile, the Royal Court saw that it had received cables voicing support for the King's efforts to regain Jordan's rights, and pledging continued allegiance to the Hashemite throne.

The cables came from heads of public and private organisations who expressed absolute trust in the King's efforts and who pledged to

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Eight parties reject peace talks

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Eight Jordanian political parties on Sunday issued a joint statement rejecting peace talks with Israel and calling on supporters to organise meetings in various governorates to voice opposition to the negotiations that begin in the southern desert on Monday.

The statement said that Jordan and Israel had signed in last September a common

agenda outlining principles for a peace agreement and followed it up in June with three other documents: one on water, energy, and the environment, another on security and borders and a third one calling for negotiations to culminate in satisfactory solutions, leading to a peace treaty.

On July 18, 1994, Jordanian-Israeli negotiations are due to start on the demarcation of the borders and on joint projects in de-

velopment, tourism, mutual relations and the creation of a cultural centre in the Jordan Valley," the statement said.

"It is clear from these documents that the two sides have already come to a broad agreement on political, economic, security issues and future relations during the Washington talks," it said.

"These broad agreements," said the statement, "were a success for Washington."

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Damascus hopes for breakthrough

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria is hoping for a breakthrough in peace talks with Israel, on the eve of a new Middle East tour by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher aimed at bringing the two countries back to the negotiating table.

One Syrian official said Damascus was "optimistic" and determined to push forward with negotiations, after U.S. President Bill Clinton stressed his commitment to a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement Friday. Mr. Clinton told Syrian President Hafez Al Assad by telephone the Israeli-Syrian talks were "extremely important," easing Syrian fears of isolation in the peace process.

A Western diplomat here said that with Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israeli-Jordanian talks also due to begin on Monday "it is not the most comfortable position" Syria has been in.

Syria's official newspaper Al Thawra on Sunday welcomed Mr. Clinton's "re-

newed commitment" to comprehensive peace in the region.

Mr. Christopher is to begin a new shuttle mission between Israel and Syria on Monday to try to revive bilateral talks which have been stalled since the Feb. 25 Hebron mosque massacre.

He is due to visit Damascus Tuesday and Friday after a stay in Israel.

Interest in his visit intensified after Foreign Minister Shimon Peres made Israel's first ever public admission Thursday of Syrian sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights.

But Syrian said Mr. Peres was offering nothing new.

Mr. Peres later accused Syria of "failing to respond to Israel's gesture."

Syria wants a clear Israeli pledge to withdraw completely from the strategic Heights.

Israel demands a Syrian commitment to full peace with open borders before negotiating the scale of a phased withdrawal.

Syria has repeatedly urged

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Moscow welcomes Jordan-Israel moves

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday received a verbal message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The letter was conveyed to King Hussein by Viktor Posuvayuk, head of the Middle East and Africa desk at the Russian Foreign Ministry.

King Hussein briefed Mr. Posuvayuk on the latest developments of the Middle East peace process and stressed Jordan's firm position vis-à-vis the peace negotiations, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The King said Jordan seeks a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region, it said.

The Russian envoy expressed the Russian leadership's appreciation of Jordan's role in establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region and praised Jordan's contribution over the past years to safeguarding regional security and stability.

Mr. Posuvayuk said the Soviet leadership appreciates King Hussein's wisdom and positions towards regional and international issues.

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Jordanian stocks stage major recovery

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices shot up by as much as seven per cent in the Amman Financial Market (AFM) in two days as a result of what investors saw as imminent economic returns for Jordan as part of the accelerated pace in the Jordanian-Israeli track of peace negotiations, brokers said Sunday.

Figures released by the market showed the AFM's general share price index edged up by four per cent after trading on Saturday and Sunday. But the actual rise in the market was closer to seven per cent than four since the index does not include many small companies whose stock gained in the last two days, brokers said.

Similarly, the decline that the market has been registering over the past months did not reflect the status of the stocks of those companies which have also been losing, they said.

The brokers estimated last week that Jordanian stocks — including shares of companies not included in the index — have lost up to 25 per cent since the beginning of the year. The index showed a decline of 12 to 13 per cent.

The index, based on 60 major companies listed in the market, closed at 152.40 points on Sunday, up 0.07 point, or 0.05 per cent, from Saturday's close, and 7.3 points, or around 4.1 per cent from last week's close of 145.1 points.

Shares worth JD 4.1 million changed hands during the last two days as many investors sought to break even after seeing stocks taking a steady plunge since March, brokers said.

Most of the 80 or so companies whose shares were traded in the last two days showed an average of three to four per cent improvement in prices. Those who showed decline were mostly deemed to be loss-making enterprises

anyway, brokers said.

The upward swing in the market followed Friday's announcement that His Majesty King Hussein had accepted an American invitation to a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Washington on July 25.

"By sheer coincidence, the announcement came after a move on Wednesday by some financial institutions to shore up stock prices by creating demand in the market so that they would not lose more," said a broker.

As investors came back to the market, they already saw the prices going up a little on Wednesday and this triggered enthusiasm among all after a long period of stagnation, said the broker, who cannot be identified under standing market guidelines.

Several other brokers agreed. "What we saw yesterday and today is the result of that enthusiasm," said a banking official who deals with investments in the

AFM.

"I expect the trend to continue for the next two or three days but the increase in prices and turnover will be very gradual before a period during which investors will await further news in the political scene," said the executive.

"The next surge will come when Washington makes a concrete move towards offering debt relief assistance to Jordan."

By and large, analysts agreed with brokers that the improvement of Jordanian stocks came against the backdrop of expectations that the King's summit with Mr. Rabin would be followed by American moves to offer debt relief to Jordan.

"We have been saying that the market would improve upon seeing economic fruits of the peace process coming to Jordan," said the broker. "Now we have news that they are coming, and this was one of the moments many investors were waiting for."

Israelis kill two Palestinians in stampede at Erez crossing

Palestinian police battle Israeli soldiers and settlers

Combined agency dispatches

EREZ, THE GAZA STRIP — Israeli and Palestinian security forces shot it out on the Gaza Strip on Sunday as two Palestinians died and dozens were wounded on both sides in the worst bloodshed since self-rule began.

The explosion of violence, which ignited before dawn as thousands of desperate workers tried to break through Israeli lines, led the army to seal off Gaza indefinitely.

After troops opened fire on protesters at the Erez checkpoint, Palestinian police, Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers became embroiled in prolonged exchanges of fire, correspondents reported.

Palestinian Health Minister Riyad Al Zanoon said 75 Palestinians were wounded, six seriously. Among the casualties were at least 15 policemen.

Israeli military officials said three soldiers were wounded, one critically. Another 20 Israeli troops and a civilian were hurt by stones amid bloodshed unprecedented since autumn began on May 4.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat called his

ministers into an emergency session and lodged immediate protests to the United Nations and the United States.

"Elements within the Israeli army and settlers hidden in the area around the Erez crossing opened fire to try to sabotage the peace process," Mr. Zanoon charged.

Israel blamed the Palestinians and the new Palestinian National Authority blamed the Israelis for what it called a "major violation of the peace agreement."

To tries of "Allah Akbar" labourers smashed through roadblocks, threw fireworks, torched a petrol station and 30 Israeli buses and bombed soldiers with stones.

At Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, Dr. Mohammad Attal told the Associated Press all the injuries were caused by rubber bullets, tear gas and bullets of M-16 rifles — weapons used by Israel.

"We got no one wounded by AK-47 automatic rifles," he said, referring to the weapons carried by Palestinian police.

An angry crowd of hundreds surrounded Shifa, shouting "revenge, revenge" as the wounded were brought

in. Islamic fundamentalists from the Hamas group addressed them from nearby mosque loudspeakers, vowing reprisals against Israeli soldiers.

Demonstrations also broke out throughout the West Bank as word of the Erez clash spread. In Hebron, the army clamped a curfew on the main square and market following stone-throwing clashes. Similar clashes were reported in Ramallah.

Palestinian merchants shut their shops and declared a general strike in protest.

Some reports said Israel had tried to reduce the number of workers entering Israel because of security fears during a holiday.

Marwan Kanafani, spokesman for Mr. Arafat, said he was concerned because there had been two protests by workers barred from entering Israel in recent days.

Israeli Gen. Yomtov Samiah and PLO Gen. Ziad Atrash were scheduled to meet to discuss the incident.

After the Israel-PLO exchange, Palestinians turned back and cheered Palestinian police, carrying some on their shoulders and chanting "in spirit, in blood, we sacrifice for you, oh Palestine."

Cars and trucks honked

their horns, celebrating what Palestinians viewed as a victory in which PLO police stood up to the former Israeli occupiers.

"The Palestinian police made us very proud today. They made the Israelis withdraw. They made them run away. They defeated them. It is the happiest day of my life," said Ahmad Mir, 16, a worker.

The shooting took place near a gas station and a bus terminal which Palestinian workers set ablaze, sending huge columns of black smoke skyward. Palestinians also looted an Israeli-owned cement factory, ignoring PLO police who tried to stop them by firing in the air.

Hisham Abdul Rezzak, a PLO official in Gaza, said the unrest began when a Palestinian worker grabbed an automatic rifle from a PLO policeman at a checkpoint and began firing in the air. Police overpowered the man and fired their weapons, apparently wounding some Palestinians.

Other workers then charged through the barricades and ran at an Israeli checkpoint, where soldiers fled. The workers then

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Iryani and Attas to meet in Paris

SANAA (Agencies) — Senior officials from northern and southern Yemen are to meet in Paris before the end of the month to discuss reconciliation in the wake of the destructive civil war, a Sanaa government source said Saturday.

Planning Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani, a northerner, and former Prime Minister Haidar Abu Bakr Attas, who joined the southern secession attempt led by former Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh, would meet under the auspices of U.N. mediator Lakhdar Brahimi, the source said.

They would discuss "the ways and means to begin a national dialogue in line with

resolutions of the U.N. Security Council on Yemen" passed during the two-month civil war which ended with the fall of Aden to northern forces on July 7.

The source said the two would be joined by Yemen's U.N. Ambassador Abdullah Al Ashtal and Abdullah Al Asaj, "foreign minister" of the "democratic republic of Yemen" declared at the end of May by Mr. Beidh but unrecognized by any state.

Mr. Attas, who was also named "prime minister" by Mr. Beidh, is officially under threat of an arrest warrant issued by Sanaa against 16 southern leaders at the height of the conflict.

But he met with Mr. Iryani

several times at U.N. headquarters in the last days of the war.

Meanwhile a tightened night curfew has been clamped on Aden, with the government saying it is to contain looting but southern leaders in exile claiming it is aimed at quashing resistance, officials said Sunday.

The officials in Sanaa said the curfew had existed since the war ended July 7 but had been "tightened" as of Saturday night. It lasts from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. (1800 GMT to 0100 GMT).

"The curfew was only tightened by internal order from Governor Taha Ahmad Ghanem to contain the looting, to bring in stolen cars,

etc.," said the government official.

Aden has been scene of widespread looting since its collapse in northern forces. Each side has accused the other of being responsible for the plunder.

But Gamal Ben Hadi, one of the southern leaders who fled to the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah when Aden fell, said the curfew was prompted by northern attempt to rein in the resistance.

"It is not to curb the looting, as they claim. They want to curb the resistance," said Mr. Hadi, speaking to the Associated Press by telephone.

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Lebanese Forces takes up underground resistance

By Rima Salamneh
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — The main Christian militia in the 1975-1990 civil war has taken up peaceful underground resistance against the Syrian-backed government following the arrest of its leader.

The outlawed Lebanese Forces is distributing leaflets proclaiming Samir Geagea innocent of all charges heaped upon him by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's government after his April 21 arrest.

The 42-year-old former warlord is awaiting trial on charges of engineering a church bombing north of Beirut in February and the murder of rival right-wing Christian leader Dany Choun, his wife and two sons in 1990.

"Samir Geagea has chosen the path of heroism because Lebanon is in danger and the Christians are in danger," said a leaflet distributed Friday in the Christian heartland north of Beirut.

The Lebanese Forces disbanded voluntarily and surrendered their arms to the authorities in 1990, when the government licensed the group to operate as a political party.

But the license was revoked last March after the group was linked to the Feb. 27 bombing of the Notre Dame de la Délivrance Church that killed 11 worshippers and wounded 60.



Samir Geagea

The group announced the formation of the Christian resistance movement in a June 28 leaflet entitled "communiqué 1." It urged Lebanon's badly splintered Christian community to reunite for survival.

"You Christians are on the way to extinction. Unite," it said.

The group's other resistance activities thus far have also been peaceful: Painting pro-Geagea graffiti and staging bell-ringing protests in remote churches in the cedar mountains of the north.

In last Friday's leaflet, the group said Geagea's indictments in both cases were "fabricated altogether by the army's intelligence bureau."

It said scores of former Lebanese Forces militiamen have been taken by the army for interrogation sessions after

Dr. Geagea's arrest and were released only after they were forced to sign pledges not to engage in politics.

The charges against Dr. Geagea carry the death penalty. He is the most prominent Lebanese accused of civil war crimes.

The leaflet described the accusations as ridiculous and said they were politically motivated to justify the crackdown on the Lebanese Forces.

"Geagea has struggled to reassert Lebanon's independence and recover its freedom to make its own destiny," the leaflet said in an obvious allusion to Syria's dominance of the country.

The leaflets refer to Lebanon as Syria's "protectorate."

Syria has 40,000 troops stationed in Lebanon as peacekeepers to prevent the rekindling of the civil war.

Troops have been often seen polishing out graffiti from the walls of mountain resort towns of the Kesrouan province, the main base of the Maronite Catholic community, which makes up the largest Christian sect in Lebanon.

The Maronites dominated power since Lebanon gained independence from France in 1943. But they have been weakened by internal power struggles and by an Arah League-backed accord that ended the civil war by giving Muslims an equal share of power with the Christians.



A car carrying an injured man, makes its way through the crowd at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza City (AFP photo)

Arafat wants Palestinian press to censor itself

GAZA CITY (AP) — Yasser Arafat suggested Saturday that Palestinian journalists censor themselves, saying they should act "in Palestine's interest."

Mr. Arafat spoke to a delegation of about 100 Palestinian journalists who came to meet him at the Palestine Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) office.

Nabil Youbani, head of the Palestine Journalists' Association, read the demands of fellow journalists to Mr. Arafat.

Topping the list was a request for freedom of speech and freedom of the Palestinian press and a guarantee that the press union will be free from interference by politicians.

Gaza journalists also brought up the sometimes brutal way in which Arafat security guards have treated reporters, beating some of them or hurting insults.

Mr. Arafat promised that he would respect freedom of expression in privately owned publications, including those put out by opposition parties.

"But I can't accept that our press be fed by imported

ideas ... or bought by Arab, Western or Asian countries," said Mr. Arafat.

"You are forming ideas and influencing public opinion. I hope this formation of ideas will be in Palestine's interest and not against it. It's my right to say that," he said.

"I beseech you in the name of Palestine, your martyrs and the children of the stone and by every holy site in this land to be responsible journalists," he added.

Also Saturday, the Palestine news agency, WAFA, began operating in the autonomous areas. It released a seven-page newsletter that listed Mr. Arafat's activities.

Work on Gaza port

Mr. Arafat said Saturday that the cornerstone for Gaza's port, the only outlet to the outside world for the autonomous areas, will be laid Aug. 1.

Mr. Arafat told a delegation of Gaza industrialists that a consortium of three companies from Holland, France and Italy will build the port. He did not disclose the location of the port.

The new port will make it possible for Gaza to import and export goods directly without having to go through Israeli or Egyptian dealers.

Also Saturday, Mr. Arafat met with U.S. Consul General Edward Abington, a few days before his expected talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Mr. Abington told reporters that he discussed economic issues with Mr. Arafat and touched briefly on Mr. Christopher's visit to the area.

Mr. Abington said it still was not clear when and where Mr. Christopher and Mr. Arafat will meet.

"I know that Mr. Christopher is looking forward to seeing the chairman (Arafat)," said Mr. Abington.

Earlier, Mr. Abington refused to comment on Mr. Christopher's visit, saying dismissively, "leave it until he comes."

Mr. Christopher is expected to begin a trip to the region on Sunday to help Jordan and Israel resolve differences and to push for progress on the stalled Syrian-Israeli track.

Damascus is hopeful

(Continued from page 1) the United States in the past few days to demand a full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territory, which it says is vital for any breakthrough in talks.

A Syrian official told AFP: "Israel's agreement to withdraw to the pre-June 4, 1967 borders is the necessary starting point to revive negotiations and bring about a comprehensive peace settlement."

The government newspaper Tishrin said Sunday: "Mr. Christopher's efforts must focus on changing the Israeli attitude."

Meanwhile Israel and the Palestinians are due to begin a fresh round of talks on Monday in Cairo on the next stage of self-rule, launched in the Gaza Strip and Jericho on May 4.

Jordan is also to begin its first talks with Israel to be held in the Middle East on Monday, ahead of the first ever summit meeting between King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Washington on

July 25.

Syria, which insists on an overall Arab settlement with Israel, is "worried and frustrated" by the progress in these tracks of negotiations, the Western diplomat said here.

To preserve what is left of Arab unity, Damascus initially reacted with a "certain dissatisfaction" but then with real moderation, the diplomat said.

Solidarity with Lebanon remains firm, Lebanese President Elias Hrawi stressed last week: "Lebanon will sign with Syria and will be the last to sign."

The official Syrian press meanwhile urged the United States to demand a full Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territory.

"The problem of the (occupied) territories is at the heart of the Israeli-Arab conflict and peace can only be achieved through (Israeli) withdrawal," said Al Thawra in a commentary.

The paper said "Israel's manoeuvring remains a source for pessimism."

Moscow

(Continued from page 1) Mr. Posuvalyuk, a personal envoy of President Yeltsin, was speaking to reporters after talks with Prime Minister Malashin.

Jordan and Israel are due to open talks on border and water rights on Monday and King Hussein is scheduled to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Washington July 25.

Mr. Posuvalyuk said "Russia believes these are great developments and should coincide with progress in the Syrian and Lebanese tracks" of peace talks with Israel.

"We are comfortable with these achievements," added Mr. Posuvalyuk, whose country is a co-sponsor of the peace process along with the United States.

The Russian envoy said his country believes in a comprehensive solution that could bring genuine stability and security to the region.

Mr. Posuvalyuk said his country will brief the U.S. administration on the results of his meetings in Damascus with Syrian officials and voiced hope that the U.S. officials will brief the Soviet leadership on the results of their talks in Middle Eastern capitals.

Later Sunday Mr. Posuvalyuk left Amman at the end of a two-day visit.

Mr. Posuvalyuk arrived from Syria, where he held talks with Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa in what diplomats described as an effort to persuade Syria and its ally Lebanon to end their boycott of the multilateral track of the Mideast peace talks.

Syria and Lebanon have consistently boycotted the multilateral talks, which are aimed at gathering Israel and the Arabs to discuss future cooperation in the fields of the economy, water, refugees, disarmament and the environment.

Talks to end Sudan civil war begin today

NAIROBI (AP) — Sudan's government and rebels are set to hold another round of talks Monday to try to end the civil war that has killed hundreds of thousands of people and threatens more than 2 million with starvation.

Representatives of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army in Nairobi for the talks, said Saturday they expect some progress.

Although the agenda proposed by mediators in May has not been made public, both sides have discussed a referendum to allow southerners to decide the region's status in Sudan.

Given the animosities between the mainly African, animist and Christian south and the traditionally dominant Arab and Muslim north, southerners would likely opt for secession, which Sudan opposes.

The insurgents took up arms in 1983 to press for increased autonomy and development for the south. The war has hampered de-

liveries of emergency food and medicine to 2.4 million southerners, the United Nations says, and in the recent months forced U.N. and private relief agencies to evacuate expatriate workers.

The Sudan People's Liberation Army, currently split into two rival factions, and the government have met several times over the past five years. But they have failed to reach any agreement.

"The government's position is that Sudan is a united country and it will remain united," Abu Baker Al Shingiet, secretary-general of Sudan's External Information Council, said in a recent interview in the capital Khartoum.

Mr. Shingiet said the government has "offered federalism with significant autonomy and powers to states" and the right to decide if they want Sharia, or Islamic law, which is opposed by the southerners.

The talks are being sponsored by Sudan's neighbours.

Almost 50 die in two Sudanese accidents

KHARTOUM (AP) — At least 22 people died of thirst and starvation after a bus they were in was lost in the Sudanese desert, newspapers reported Sunday.

And in another northern Sudan transport accident, papers reported a fishing boat pressed into service as a ferry overturned and pitched the 28 people aboard into the Nile. All but three drowned.

Al Ingaz Al Watani reported survivors trudged more than 100 kilometres and struggled into Khartoum to tell the story of the bus that strayed into Sudan's eastern desert July 8.

The newspaper said the driver lost his way in seasonal sandstorms, steered into the desert and became lost. The vehicle became disabled, and the 40 people aboard the bus found themselves lost without food or water.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Policeman shot dead in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — A suspected militant shot dead a plainclothes policeman in a normally quiet city in southern Egypt after surrendering, security officials said here Sunday. Rebeli Mohammad Ali was on duty with three other policemen late Saturday near a bridge in al Minya, about 240 kilometres south of Cairo, when they saw a wanted militant, Hassan Taha Abdul Wahab, crossing the bridge on a bicycle. Abdul Wahab was wanted in connection with acts of terrorism and membership of the militant group Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, the officials said. The four went to arrest Abdul Wahab, who immediately surrendered. But the suspect pulled out a gun shortly after his arrest, and pumped several bullets into Ali's body. The other three policemen fired at Abdul Wahab as he fled the scene, but they stopped shooting for fear of hitting passers-by, the sources said. Abdul Wahab had been arrested several times before, but had always managed to escape. Police launched a manhunt for Abdul Wahab throughout Al Minya, arresting 19 suspected militants they thought could lead them to the gunman, the source said. Al Minya has been relatively untouched by the militant violence which has plagued the neighbouring province of Assiut. Nearly 400 people have died since March 1992 when militants launched a violent campaign aimed at toppling Egypt's secular government.

No early end to Saudi gems case

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thai police have evidence linking more potential suspects to \$20 million in missing Saudi gems but are unlikely to wrap up the case soon, press reports said Sunday. The conclusion had been further delayed by new information potentially implicating "many individuals" in the police department, the Bangkok Post quoted Interior Ministry Permanent Secretary Aree Wong-Araya as saying. He reportedly said he was not sure the case could be wrapped up this year or that all the missing jewels could be recovered. In 1989, a Thai servant stole the jewellery from a Saudi palace and fled to Thailand, where he was arrested and the loot seized. Part of the jewellery recovered by Thai police was not returned to the owner, and much of what was handed back turned out to be fake. That case, and the murders of five Saudi businessmen and diplomats in Thailand in 1989 and 1990 poisoned relations between the two countries, leading Riyadh to downgrade its embassy here and stop issuing visas to Thai. Eight Thais, all but one policeman, are currently on trial in the case. Six suspects named later have surrendered for questioning. The former national police chief, Sawasdi Amornvivat, and police department legal advisor Sanong Watanawar, both police generals, have been given until the end of August to submit to questioning but have so far not responded. "If they do not surrender, I'll arrest them myself," current police chief Pratin Sanitprapop was quoted as saying.

Kurd-linked violence in Turkey kills 20

ANKARA (R) — Thirteen Kurdish guerrillas and seven villagers were killed in clashes and attacks in Turkey, officials said Sunday. An official statement from the regional governor's office in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir said nine members of the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) were killed in three separate clashes in the southeast. It did not say when the clashes took place. The semi-official Anatolia news agency said troops killed four PKK rebels including a woman in the eastern town of Zaza. In another incident in the southeastern town of Dicle, PKK guerrillas opened fire on villagers on Saturday, killing seven and wounding four, the agency said.

Iran protests Venezuelan accusations

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has protested to Venezuela over allegations that four of its diplomats in Caracas kidnapped Iranian asylum-seekers. The official Iranian news agency IRNA said Sunday the Venezuelan charge d'affaires in Tehran, Sledadio Sanz, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Saturday to receive the official protest. Earlier the Venezuelan government confirmed newspaper allegations in Venezuela that four armed Iranian diplomats had kidnapped members of an Iranian family who had sought political asylum after arriving in Caracas. The daily El Universal said Friday that the refugees had been detained in the Iranian embassy in Caracas against their will. An Iranian Foreign Ministry official, however, criticised Venezuela for its "unfounded move" in confirming the allegations demanded an official explanation.

Senior Kurdish guerrilla commander killed

ANKARA (AP) — A senior Kurdish guerrilla commander was among those killed in recent clashes between rebels and Turkish troops in eastern Turkey, news reports said. Ibrahim Incedursun, who oversaw the political training of the guerrillas at the Zaleh camp, 110 kilometres inside northern Iraq, died in Kars province, bordering Armenia, the Turkish daily Cumhuriyet reported. He was a deputy chairman of the Kurdish People's Labour Party, banned in 1993 on charges it sponsored Kurdish separatism. Government troops launched an operation Thursday against rebel sanctuaries in the rugged northeastern province. So far, the battle has claimed 51 lives, including 37 rebels, Turkish security sources said. The Germany-based Kurdish news agency Kurd-A, disputed those figures, saying instead 25 soldiers and five rebels were killed. Security forces killed 18 guerrillas in five separate southeastern provinces on Saturday, the Anatolia news agency said. The Turkish army recently stepped up its anti-guerrilla campaign and the government suspended all army discharges to concentrate on the fight. The guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party, fighting for autonomy in southeastern Turkey, stage hit-and-run attacks from their bases in Iran, Iraq and Syria. The fighting has claimed more than 12,000 lives since 1984.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 ... PH El Heroule
17:10 ... Bequmnoir
17:30 ... Musiques Sans Frontières
18:30 ... News in French
18:45 ... The Weekly Sports Magazine
19:00 ... News in Hebrew
19:30 ... Innovations
20:00 ... News in Arabic
20:30 ... The Nancy
21:10 ... Can Tropical Rainforests Be Saved?
22:00 ... News in English
22:30 ... G.P.
23:10 ... Top Cops

PRAYER TIMES

04:04 ... Fajr
05:36 ... (Sunrise) Dubai
12:42 ... Dhahar
16:22 ... 'Asr
19:47 ... Maghrib
21:19 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Switfeth, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church

Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 62366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 63541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 77261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675491
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Fine weather conditions will prevail with clouds appearing at low altitudes and winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman ... 18 / 29
Aqaba ... 25 / 37
Deserts ... 17 / 32
Jordan Valley ... 23 / 36

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Nidal Al Dalabeh ... 622195
Dr. Bassam Karadabeh ... 799200
Dr. Yabry Abdul Salam ... 736072
Dr. Fakhr Tayeh ... 885880
Fines pharmacy ... 661912
Ferdous pharmacy ... 783536
Al Azza pharmacy ... 637055
Nairokh pharmacy ... 623672
Al Salam pharmacy ... 636730
Yacoub pharmacy ... 644845
Shamsani pharmacy ... 637660
Nairokh pharmacy ... 623672
Najib pharmacy ... 847632
DEBID:
Dr. Hisham Hyasat ... 983440
Alqada pharmacy ... (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Mohammad Al Khamis ... 273099
Khalil pharmacy ... 985417

EMERGENCIES

Control Centre ... 637111
Civil Defence Department ... 661111
Police ... 630941
Civil Defence Emergency ... 199
Rescue Police ... 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade ... 891228
Blood Bank ... 775121
Highway Police ... 843406
Traffic Police ... 894390
Public Security Department ... 630311
Hotel Complaints ... 605800
Price Complaints ... 661176
Water and Sewerage ... 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints ... 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ... 121
Overseas Calls ... 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs ... 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs ... 661101
Jordan Television ... 773111
Radio Jordan ... 774111
Water Authority ... 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615
Complaints
Electric Power Company ... 636381
RJ Flight Information ... 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport ... 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn ... 642816
Akhel Maternity, J. Amn ... 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity ... 642362
Malhas, J. Amman ... 636140
Palestine, Shamsani ... 6641714
Shamsani Hospital ... 669131
University Hospital ... 645845
Al-Musaber Hospital ... 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali ... 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali ... 6641646
Ibati, Al-Mahjoun ... 771012
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ... 775111/26
Army, Marfa ... 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital ... 602240/50
Anat Hospital ... 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital
Ibn Sina Hospital ... (09)900560
Al-Hissa Modern Hospital ... (09)986732
Al-Hissa Hospital ... (09)999990
Gracia Basm Hospital ... (02)272555
Greek Catholic Hospital ... (02)272255
Ibn Al Nadra Hospital ... (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital ... (03)341111

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
09:00 ... Damascus (DJ)
09:30 ... Jeddah (RJ)
09:30 ... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 ... Riyadh (RJ)
11:00 ... Beirut (RJ)
11:00 ... New Delhi (RJ)
11:25 ... Cairo (RJ)
11:45 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
12:45 ... Rhodes (add) (RJ)
13:00 ... Bangkok (RJ)
13:20 ... Sanaa (RJ)
13:30 ... Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
06:45 ... Moscow (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:00 ... Khartoum (SD)
12:30 ... Sanaa (RJ)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

07:00 ... Khartoum (SD)
12:30 ... Sanaa (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:45 ... Beirut (RJ)
12:00 ... Sanaa (RJ)
12:20 ... Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:00 ... Rhodes (add) (RJ)
13:25 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
13:15 ... London (RJ)
13:45 ... Cairo (RJ)
14:35 ... Moscow (RJ)
20:45 ... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:40 ... Doha (RJ)
21:45 ... Damascus (RJ)
22:30 ... Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:30 ... Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:05 ... Istanbul (TK)
09:15 ... Beirut (ME)
14:20 ... Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
21:15 ... Cairo (MS)
22:15 ... Beirut (add) (ME)
22:30 ... Dubai (EM)
02:30 ... Amsterdam (KL)

RIJAZ RAILWAY

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple ... 550 / 400
Apricots ... 800 / 600
Banana ... 620
Banana (Makassar) ... 620
Cabbage ... 140 / 80
Carrot ... 250 / 180
Cherry ... 1200 / 700
Cucumber ... 300 / 200
Cucumbers (large) ... 90 / 50
Cucumbers (small) ... 200 / 120
Eggplant ... 180 / 100
Fig ... 480 / 300
Garlic ... 750 / 520
Grapes ... 450 / 350
Lemon ... 620 / 500
Marrow (large) ... 60 / 50
Marrow (small) ... 180 / 100
Mushrooms ... 150 / 80
Okra ... 850 / 600
Orange ... 500 / 400
Onion (dry) ... 220 / 160
Sweet Melon ... 210 / 140
Pepper (hot) ... 340 / 240
Pepper (sweet) ... 240 / 180
Potato ... 450 / 300
Peanuts ... 750 / 600
Tomato ... 110 / 50
String beans ... 320 / 220
Watermelon ... 100 / 60

دليل في لك



Her Majesty Queen Noor Sunday greets one of the children's Conference opening in Amman (photo by Rana Hussein)

Queen Noor welcomes participants to 14th Arab Children's Congress

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 40 Arab children gathered Sunday at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) for the opening of the 14th Arab Children's Congress.

Her Majesty Queen Noor, who initiated this event following the conclusion of the 1980 Arab summit in Amman, arrived to welcome the participating children representing the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sudan, Iraq, Oman, Yemen, Egypt, Palestine, Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, Libya, Morocco, Lebanon and Jordan.

Colourfully dressed in their national costumes, the children were addressed by two of their peers and were treated to a variety of Jordanian folkloric performances.

"In the name of all Arab children, we thank Her Majesty Queen Noor for providing us the opportunity to meet here in Amman," said Salem Felini (13), an Omani participant who spoke on behalf of all the children.

Addressing the Queen, ministers, officials and family members, Salem said "we came here with hopes in our hearts to learn and share new things together to be able to face life's challenges in the future."

Nine-year-old Jordanian pupil Asma Ibrahim also welcomed the gathering saying that "childhood is a stage by which we grow and become more mature, and childhood is the secret of life's joys."

"Frequently nations are valued on how much they care for their children," she added.

The event, being held under the theme "The Role of the Family in Promoting Common Arab Culture," is organized and sponsored by Noor Al Hosselo Foundation (NHFF).

During the six-day congress, the children will take part in various performances including folkloric dances and poetry readings depicting the traditional cultures of the participating Arab countries, in addition to other regular entertainment programmes.

The children will have an opportunity to visit tourist sites and get acquainted with Jordanian families, attend workshops and lectures conducted by Jordanian intellectuals, and visit children's libraries as well as the University of Jordan.

This year's programme includes two workshops that will involve the children in various arts such as painting, acting, poetry reading.

The children will also tour the Haya Arts Centre Dome of Stars, a children's planetarium.

The workshop will highlight the cohesion among Arab families and the importance of projecting family values and the strong relationships among members of the same family.

The Arab Children's Congress aims at bringing together Arab children from various parts of the region to participate in a programme of cultural activities, discussions and visits to historical sites and development projects in the Kingdom.

The congress seeks to encourage the concept that Arab children belong to one nation with the same culture, stresses the importance of learning new skills and introduces the children to come to know more about Jordan, its people and history as well as its relationship with other Arab countries.

The event also highlights Arab children's status, working to ensure the quality of that status by exchanging knowledge and experiences and in order to increase children's abilities and encourage them to play important roles in various cultural and educational activities.

The four or five children invited from each Arab state to convene in Amman for the congress range in age between 10 and 15.

Queen Noor toured a book exhibition following the end of the event.

The Queen was accompanied by Mrs. Noor Izzeddine and was received by Minister of Tourism Mohammad Adwan and Minister of Culture Jumaa Hammad.

Japanese team here to draft tourism plan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mohammad Adwan Sunday met in his office with the Deputy Managing Director of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Mr. Iwaguchi, the mission leader, and the accompanying delegation currently visiting Jordan to prepare a master plan for Jordan's tourism outlook to the year 2010.

Dr. Adwan welcomed the delegation and expressed Jordan's appreciation of Japan's efforts to develop tourism in the Kingdom.

He stressed the importance for Jordan to develop its tourism industry, saying "our needs are many, and any assistance is welcomed."

Dr. Adwan referred to the master plan Japan has already drafted for the northern regions of the Kingdom in the past. The current proposed master plan will focus on the southern parts of Jordan.

The minister acknowledged and thanked Japan's ministry of foreign affairs for sending a delegation last week to which they announced Tokyo's willingness to appoint this mission to prepare studies on tourism in the region and its future needs.

Dr. Adwan stressed the



Minister of Tourism Mohammad Adwan (2nd from left) and Ministry Secretary General Ghassan Mufleh Sunday meet with Deputy managing director of the Japan

International Cooperation Agency, Mr. Iwaguchi, and an accompanying delegation (Petra photo)

importance of preserving the antiquities and the environment during the implementation of the master plan, saying that this study is very important for the coming stage especially if a comprehensive and lasting peace is accomplished in the region.

The issue of infrastructure was discussed and the need for Japan's assistance in this area along with the drawing of a master plan.

The water supply issue and

its relation to developing tourism sites was discussed concerning long term planning.

Dr. Adwan stressed the value of the mission visiting

all sites in Jordan including Jerash and the Jordan Valley, as intentions are to develop local tourism in the valley.

The two sides also discussed

prospects of the delegation's meeting with private sector representatives.

Meetings are scheduled to be held up to July 26, to determine the scope of work.

Water delivery programme to start in Bekaa soon

Ministers respond to complaints

AMMAN (Petra) — The Water Authority will soon apply a distribution programme to ensure water supplies to all parts of the Bekaa refugee camp where residents have complained of water shortages, according to Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irshaidat.

Speaking during a visit to the camp with Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzak Ensour and Minister of State Mohammad Thweib, Dr. Irshaidat said Water Authority teams are repairing the network within the Bekaa water basin and will soon announce a tender to lay new water networks in that region.

The minister said that the tender, valued at JD 500,000, entails laying a five-kilometre pipeline around the camp, adding that three artesian wells are being drilled to further guarantee water supplies to local residents.

A spokesman for the

camp's services committee had presented several requests outlining the local residents' complaints that water reaches them only once every fortnight and the roads in the camp are in bad need of repair.

The minister of public works and housing told the meeting which was attended by Balqa Governor Eid Qatameh, that beginning 1995 the ministry will allocate special funds to repair all roads in the camp. He said the ministry has allocated JD 30,000 for this year's repairs.

Minister Mohammad Thweib said the Department of Palestinian Affairs has allocated an additional JD 30,000 for road repair, making the total JD 60,000.

Present at the meeting were Parliament members Ibrahim Shideh and Mohammad Oweida, in addition to a United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) representative.

New plant to produce salts in Ghor Safi

AMMAN (J.T.) — A consortium of Italian firms Sunday signed a contract with the Arab Potash Company (APC) to set up a \$19.5 million plant in the Ghor Safi area near the Dead Sea to extract table and industrial salts.

According to APC Director General Suleiman Hawari, who signed the deal at the company's office in Amman, the new plant would produce 1.2 million tonnes of industrial salt and 31,000 tonnes of table salt annually.

He said that work on the project, whose products will be purely for export, is expected to take 20 months.

APC sources said that the new project is to be implemented under the umbrella of the Jordanian holding company. The \$85 million company, set up last January, has been designed to oversee the exploitation of Dead Sea mineral resources.

The holding company, named the Jordan Industrial Chemicals of the Dead Sea Minerals Company, is jointly owned by the Jordan Investment Corporation, the APC, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) and a consortium of Jordanian banks.

According to APC engineers the industrial salt to be produced through the new plant will be 99.7 per cent pure, while the table salt will be 99.9 per cent pure.

The table salt, to which iodine will be added is expected to have a high competitive edge over similar products from other countries on the international markets.

Ambitious plan against desertification takes shape on Amman's eastern end

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Amman Municipality is embarking on what Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi calls an ambitious plan to protect eastern Amman from the fast encroachment of the desert.

The mayor said a 10,000 dunum area of barren land east of the Ring Road about 20 kilometres east of Amman will be planted with trees within 10 years.

The area is state land which has been leased as quarries but will soon be the property of the municipality which will have the quarries moved, Dr. Abbadi said Sunday.

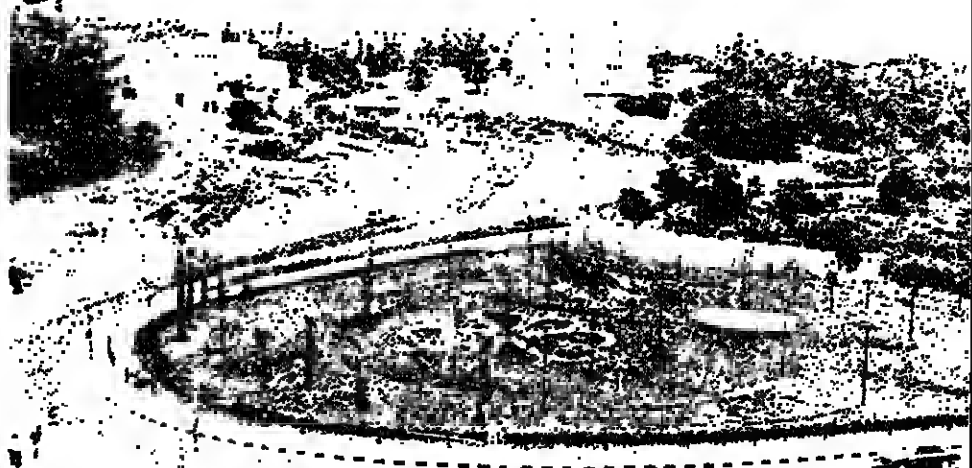
The municipality has already started Al Hussein National Park in the area on a 12,000 square-metre piece of land on which 120,000 trees were planted.

"Determination to make the area green and a strike of luck" ensured the success of the park, Dr. Abbadi said.

When the park was first built, the municipality had to depend on tanks bringing water from Amman to irrigate the plants. Later, and against all expectations, the municipality discovered that the area is rich in underground water when it dug a well there.

The well currently produces enough water to irrigate the park and the additional area the municipality is planning to plant, said the mayor.

He said the Cabinet is currently studying a proposal to create a central region authority which will coordinate planning of the capital and the governorates of Zarqa, Madaba



The Queen Zein Al Sharaf Garden near Jabal Al Qusour

and Balqa which surround it. This, he said, will help ensure coordination on projects and building regulations on border areas.

Speaking to journalists on a tour of Amman one year after he took office as mayor of the capital, Dr. Abbadi promised Ammanites better facilities and more work to make the 1.5 million-people-city a better place to live.

The mayor said the municipality will continue its work to maintain the streets of the capital and solve traffic jams.

He said more pedestrian tunnels at high risk areas nearby schools and hospitals are planned in addition to the five which have already been constructed in different areas of the capital. Dr. Abbadi said studies are being conducted to build a fork bridge over the Dakhliyah Circle, which will help ease the traffic jam in the area.

In addition, he said the

municipality, whose budget for 1994 is JD 69 million, will maintain its campaign to green the capital, but he admitted it is doing very little to fight the fast spreading pollution.

More "gardens," like the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Garden near Jabal Al Qusour area are planned for different areas in the capital in an effort to bring back the greenery of the city, Dr. Abbadi said.

Plans to name streets and give numbers to buildings will also be completed soon and followed by the publication of a map and a guide of Amman within a year, the mayor said.

By the beginning of next year, tenders will be offered to build a complex that will house city hall, a national library and exhibition halls on an area of 100 dunums in downtown Amman.

Seventy to 80 dunums of the area will be gardens, and the complex, whose

cost is estimated at JD 16.5 million, will "be a cultural monument in the city," Dr. Abbadi said.

The municipality, whose budget is enough to keep things going but not enough to realise its ambitions, is currently housed in a rented building downtown for a monthly fee of JD 90,000, said Dr. Abbadi.

The municipality's main revenue comes from fees and 20 per cent of the fuel tax that the government collects. Dr. Abbadi said the capital is entitled to 35 per cent of the tax, which goes to municipalities across the Kingdom, but the government cut its share of the levy in order to support other debt-stricken municipalities.

Dr. Abbadi said the municipality will continue to close Shmeisani area to road vehicles every Thursday night as an activity aimed "at making the residents of the city happy."

Jordanian drugs get WHO approval

AMMAN (J.T.) — The standard and quality of medicines produced in Jordan meets with the approval of the World Health Organisation (WHO), according to WHO representative in the Near East region Omar Suleiman.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Suleiman said Sunday that the high quality of Jordanian pharmaceutical products has enabled the Kingdom to market its drugs in Arab and

foreign countries. WHO, which issues guidelines for pharmaceutical manufacturing, considers the drugs produced in Jordan to be of good quality and meeting internationally recognised specifications, he said.

Jordan has six pharmaceutical companies and four factories manufacturing veterinary products, according to the Jordan Pharmacists Association (JPA).

The JPA said that nearly 80 per cent of the total pro-

duction is being marketed in Arab and foreign nations, securing at least JD 50 million in annual revenues.

WHO, said Dr. Suleiman, has been supporting the Ministry of Health's drive to expand primary health care services and also has been providing advice and expertise to the country in the field of drug manufacturing and distribution, the fight against contagious diseases, mother and child health care and the care of the handicapped.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Exhibition of abstract oil paintings by Mohab Al Sarraf at Orfati Art Gallery in Umm Utheima (Tel. 826932).

Exhibition by plastic artist Sa'ad Hilmi at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Alfa Art Gallery, Jabal Amman (Tel. 639350).

Amman 5th Furniture Fair at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road (Tel. 847113).

Ceramic exhibition by plastic artists Dr. Mahmoud Sadeq and Da'd Mifteh at Bakr Barjous Engineering Establishment, University Road (Tel. 688479).

Exhibition of paintings by Omar Hamdan

Shahwan at Darat Al Fuman of the Abdal Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists (Tel. 643251/2).

Plastic art exhibition by Hussein De'sseh at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art (Tel. 695291).

Exhibition entitled "Arab Artists in France" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jabal Luweibdeh, off Al Muntazah Circle (Tel. 630128).

Exhibition by plastic artist Khairi Harzalah at the Jordanian Plastic Association in Shmeisani (Tel. 699914).

Guantanamo bulges as Haitians are processed for safe haven

GUANTANAMO NAVAL BASE, Cuba (AP) — Three weeks ago, this was a sleepy training centre with about 150 tents left empty since the last time Haitian asylum-seekers came.

The strain is starting to show. A pale peach tent city stretching the length of a former air strip is home to those who fled their impoverished homeland.

Rolls of concertina wire and portable toilets line either side of the camp, which can house 17,500 people. Crews are working to increase the camp's capacity to 23,000 people.

Most of those fleeing the military regime that ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991 have only been at the camp for the three weeks it has been in operation.

But the numbers include 534 people who were granted asylum before July 5, when the Clinton administration changed its policy and began denying entry into the United States for those who set out by boat. The group is waiting for sponsors.

Since then, Haitians rescued at sea are asked if they want to be repatriated or stay in a "safe haven." For now, the safe haven is simply a different section of the tent

city, but U.S. officials hope a Latin American or Caribbean nation eventually will agree to house the refugees.

So far, 2,225 asylum-seekers have gone home. Officials say they went voluntarily.

"They decide to go back for a mixture of reasons," said Daisy Dell, team leader for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which reviews the case of every Haitian who is returned.

"Some want to go back because they know they can't go to the U.S. to get a job," she said. "Or they miss their families and they can't communicate with them, or because the camp conditions are not what they expected and we can't tell them where they're moving to."

Haitians are housed 14 to 16 per tent. Families are kept together. Single men and women are separated.

There are also tents for unaccompanied children. Some have parents in another camp on the island but have not been able to locate them. Others left Haiti alone. They range in age from 6 to 25.

They eat three times a day: Breakfast is beans and rice, dinner is beans, rice and meat, and lunch is a packaged military "meal ready to eat."

For some, that's more than they got at home.

"I'd like to stay here the rest of my life before going back to Haiti," said Nicholas Diodonne, 35, who lived in Miami for 12 years before returning to Haiti to take care of his sick mother.

Meanwhile U.S. Ambassador William Swing urged the remaining 3,500 Americans in Haiti to leave before all commercial flights stop at the end of the month, but said a U.S. invasion was not imminent.

Mr. Swing also said the U.S. government would charter planes or boats to evacuate Americans if necessary. Mr. Swing met Friday with representatives of the American community to outline contingency plans if the U.S. follows through with a threatened invasion to restore Haiti's democratically elected government.

Mickey McLaney, an American hotel and casino owner who attended the meeting, said Mr. Swing advised them to monitor the radio for security warnings.

Mr. McLaney quoted Mr. Swing as urging Americans to leave before Air France suspends commercial flights from Haiti after July 31, effectively cutting off the country from air travel. Canadian and American airlines stopped flights last month.

Mr. McLaney, who has lived in Haiti for 25 years, said he doubted many Americans who stayed in Haiti despite trade, air and financial sanctions, would leave now.

"Swing advised us to leave, but he said, 'I know, probably none of you are leaving,'" Mr. McLaney told the Associated Press.

"Swing said he didn't feel a panic situation yet, and made it perfectly clear he can't tell us to leave. He can advise us but he can't order."

About 6,500 Americans have left since the sanctions were imposed to pressure Haiti's military-backed government to resign, and allow President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to return from exile in the United States. Mr. Aristide was ousted in a 1991 coup.

Mr. Aristide told his countrymen late Friday that the day of his return is close at hand.

"I am returning to restate security for all Haitians to live in peace," Mr. Aristide said in a pre-recorded speech broadcast over Haiti by two U.S. military planes.

The U.S. Navy has dispatched 16 ships carrying about 4,700 sailors and the Marines off Haiti. They are in addition to 15 U.S. Coast Guard cutters patrolling for refugees escaping on small boats.

3 hostages feared dead in Cambodia

SYDNEY (R) — The Australian government said on Sunday it feared two Britons and an Australian kidnapped in Cambodia in April by suspected Khmer Rouge guerrillas were no longer alive.

"I can confirm reports that strong evidence has now emerged that Ms. Kellie Wilkinson and her two British travelling companions, Dominic Chappell and Tina Denny, who were abducted in Cambodia three months ago, are no longer alive," Foreign Minister Gareth Evans said in a statement.

Mr. Evans said Cambodian police had recently recovered fragments of human remains and clothing near guerrilla camps in southern Cambodia.

This had led "Australian and British police advisers to conclude that there is a high likelihood — though not yet absolute proof — that the three young captives have been killed," he added.

Britain's Independent Television News (ITN) had earlier quoted Scotland Yard police sources as saying the three had been murdered by their captors.

Mr. Chappell, 25, his Australian girlfriend, Wilkinson, 24, and their British friend Denny, 24, managed a popular restaurant in Siem Reap.

Cambodian authorities have said they feared the three were dead and relatives say they had been told to prepare for the worst.

In London, a Foreign Office spokesman said Sunday there was "substantial circumstantial evidence to suggest the hostages may have been murdered."

Gunmen seized the three on the main road between Phnom Penh and the southern port of Sihanoukville April 11.

Their taxi was held up at an illegal roadblock about 130 kilometres south of the capital and the trio were ordered out of the car and marched off into the surrounding hills.

Grassroots turns up the volume on health care

WASHINGTON (R) — Backers of sweeping health care reform hope that a surge of grassroots enthusiasm will help their cause as Americans start paying more attention to the looming congressional debate.

"I think you'll see a much more engaged electorate," South Dakota Senator Thomas Daschle predicted.

But foes of President Bill Clinton's health care agenda, who have organised around the issue for months, are also likely to turn up the volume.

"We've been engaged for the last six months," said Jim Weidman of the National Federation of Independent Business, whose small business members have been effective adversaries to President Clinton's health reform agenda.

Some lawmakers who back the president's approach privately admit they worry about whether a critical mass of Americans will rouse themselves from their summer holidays to become passionate health care activists.

Recognising that the next two weeks are critical, labour unions, consumer groups, and advocacy coalitions are planning a host of ads and activities, ranging from local telephone networks to cross-country bus tours, aimed at educating, and energising, people.

President Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, as well as cabinet members, plan to keep health reform at the forefront.

The debate has been going on for months in committees and caucuses. But the language is obscure, and even lawmakers acknowledge that many people have not closely followed the twists and nuances.

Democratic Party leaders in the House and Senate are working on final bills that they will send to the two chambers for debate in the next few weeks. The moderate and liberal factions are

Santer faces test at Europarlament

BRUSSELS (R) — Jacques Santer faces his first big test this week when he goes before the European Parliament to seek approval of his much-criticised appointment as European Commission president.

The Luxembourg prime minister will address the assembly in the French city of Strasbourg Thursday against a backdrop of scathing press reviews that have dogged him since he was first mooted for the top European Union post.

It will be Mr. Santer's first opportunity to lay out his views on Europe to a large audience and to dispel the widespread view that he will be a lacklustre spokesman for the soon-to-be enlarged bloc.

Adding an edge to the event, parliament plans to vote on the appointment following the speech.

It is not legally binding and Mr. Santer is expected to be approved. But in the event he were rejected the appointment would in practice be dead.

Mr. Santer was named Friday to replace Jacques Delors, who is leaving the commission in January after three terms and 10 years in the job.

A compromise candidate chosen after better-known names had either dropped out or been rejected, Mr. Santer has been pilloried in Europe's press as a weak replacement for the visionary philosopher Delors.

Despite years of experience in European affairs —

and 10 years as a prime minister — Mr. Santer has been dubbed in various newspapers as colourless, uninspiring and insignificant.

One newspaper likened his political profile to a flat line on a brain scan.

The parliament, however, is expected to approve Mr. Santer's appointment, although it may be a half-hearted endorsement.

To reject the choice of the 12 member states would be to throw the union into a debilitating institutional crisis between governments and the parliament. Few on either side would wish that.

Leaders of the assembly's political groups met German Chancellor Helmut Kohl before the appointment was made Friday and gave no indication they would mount a challenge to Mr. Santer.

Wilfried Martens, head of the parliament's mainly Christian Democrat European People's Party, said he was "confident" Mr. Santer, a fellow Christian Democrat, would be a good president.

The Socialist group, the parliament's largest, was less positive, but considered likely to go along with the appointment.

Mr. Santer's appearance before the parliament — meeting for the first time since June's elections — is tied to new powers given to the assembly, the EU's only directly elected body, by the Maastricht Treaty on European Union.

The Planetarium Society hold a "pioneering the space frontier" dinner. The space society will also host a breakfast for Congress.

But on the same day, the Cato Institute think tank is holding a seminar critical of the U.S. space programme, entitled, "Is NASA the greatest obstacle to space enterprise?"

The Planetarium Society is holding a "star party" Thursday at the U.S. Naval Observatory and a Friday public lecture on the crash of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 into Jupiter. Carl Sagan and comet discoverers Carolyn and Eugene Shoemaker and David Levy are featured.

On Sunday July 24, the National Space Society is the organiser of a 5-kilometre (3.1-mile) "race for space" in Washington.

Also on July 24, there will be an international space week celebration on the mall, including a space rap contest for children, displays of planetary rovers and a "destiny in space" exhibit.

As Americans look back with nostalgia at the first moon shot 25 years ago, scientists are looking forward to the next possible time humans might walk on the moon.

The consensus: Not for another 25 years. At least.

"It's not on the radar screen," said Mark Hess, a spokesman for NASA's

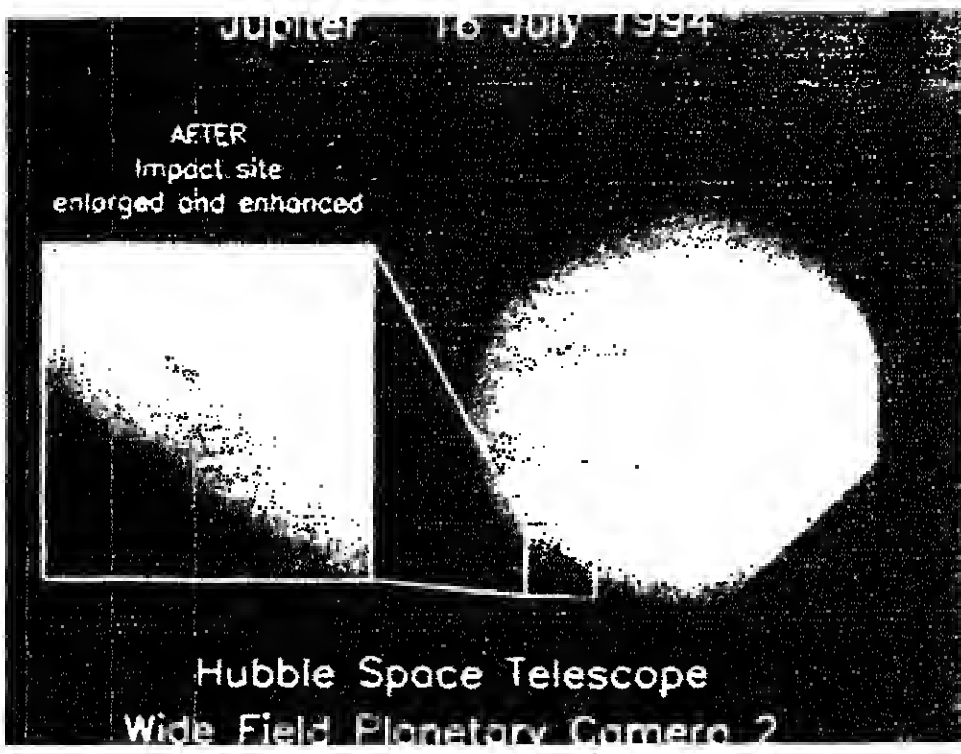


Image of Jupiter's cloudtops after the impact of the first fragment (A) of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 on July 16. A violet filter of the Wide Field Camera 2 of the Hubble Space Telescope was used to make the image after the impact (AFP photo)

Fragment A of comet makes Earth-sized impact on Jupiter

BALTIMORE, Md (R) — A fragment of the doomed comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 made an Earth-sized mark on Jupiter, whetting astronomical appetites for 20 more mini-comets expected to collide with the great planet this week.

Fragment A, thought to be one of the smallest of the 21 pieces of the comet, slammed into Jupiter's surface around 4:16 p.m. EDT Saturday (2018 GMT) in the beginnings of what astronomers are calling a once-in-a-millennium occurrence.

Speeding toward Jupiter at 138,000 miles an hour, the fragment caused an explosion on impact that rose about 600 miles (1,000 km) above the planet's surface and was seen by telescopes in Spain and Chile and confirmed by the first images from the orbiting Hubble space telescope, which were shown at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore.

The black-and-white picture showed the explosion as a light-colored dot near the edge of the visible disc of Jupiter and a mysterious black spot at the point of explosion.

A later enhanced version of the image showed an oval "bird's eye" with a dark splotch at the centre where

the comet fragment hit and a smudgy rim outside it the area of the impact was about the size of Earth but seemed small on Jupiter's gigantic surface.

The impact, which will not affect life on Earth, fulfilled the hopes of the comet's American discoverers, Eugene and Carolyn Shoemaker and David Levy.

The three celebrated with champagne at a news conference at the institute as the first rough Hubble image was released.

"I'm absolutely thrilled to pieces," Mr. Levy said. "It's such a rare thing when nature calls you on the phone and says, 'I'm going to drop 20 comets on Jupiter at 138,000 miles (220,000 km) an hour all I want you to do is watch'... We are watching with everything we've got tonight, and nature winked at us."

Hubble's pictures are significant because, unlike ground-based telescopes, its images are not impeded by Earth's atmosphere. The best pictures of the actual impact — not just the crash site — are likely to come months from now when the satellite Galileo sends pictures back to Earth.

The crash of fragment A is the first in a "string of pearls"

of 21 mini-comets that formed when the comet broke up when it came close to Jupiter in 1992.

Eugene Shoemaker said before the picture was shown that early indications from the Calar Alto Observatory in Granada, Spain, and the Nordic Optical Telescope at La Silla, Chile, had suggested that the discoverers were on the right track.

These two ground-based telescopes saw a visible plume from the impact of fragment A, he said, noting that any sighting of a blast on Jupiter would confirm theories that the comet fragment would crash with great force into the planet, sending a fireball up and out over Jupiter's cloud tops.

Computer models shown at the news conference show the developing explosion spiking high above the planet, then cooling and spreading out to more than 1,200 miles (2,000 km) across.

Astronomers see the crash of Shoemaker-Levy as a prime opportunity to see what effects such strong impacts have on a planet and to apply this to Earth.

One mini-comet, fragment G, is projected to be about 25 times the brightness or size of the chunk that hit Jupiter Saturday.

Russia blamed for Romanian revolution

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's intelligence agency, in a report exonerating the hated Securitate secret police, has blamed the bloodshed of the country's 1989 revolution on chaotic army action and interference by Russian spies and saboteurs.

The report by the Romanian Intelligence Service (RIS), the agency which succeeded executed Stalinist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's Securitate, was released to media this week.

The document did not understate popular discontent as a spark of the uprising that

led to Ceausescu's fall and summary execution by firing squad in late December 1989, the climax of an upheaval which left more than 1,000 people dead and made it Eastern Europe's bloodiest anti-Communist revolution.

But diplomatic nods and winks between the United States and Moscow, secret summit agreements between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President George Bush, plus a flurry of spying and sabotage in Romania, manipulated the event, it said.

"That the hot end of De-

cember that ended the Communist regime belongs to the Romanian people is beyond doubt, but there were also some actions which involved foreign interests and this can be proven," the report said.

"Existing information leads to the conclusion that the Soviet Secret Service — intelligence and diversionist teams — was connected to all the events and phases," it said.

It also blamed badly coordinated action by the Balkan country's army, which it said had led to crossfire killings in at least 10 incidents.

25th moonwalk anniversary sparks fetes, contests

WASHINGTON (R) — The 25th anniversary of the first human footsteps on the moon has prompted conferences, commemorative stamps, contests and one debate seminar.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is helping to sponsor only one event, a two-day conference on Monday and Tuesday in cooperation with the National Geographic Society and the University of Maryland.

The conference will discuss the value of human and robotic space exploration and its social rationale in the post-cold war world.

On Tuesday, the finalists in a national space settlement design competition compete to see which of four teams can design the best human space habitat at George Washington University.

The National Air and Space Museum holds a giant evening reception Tuesday and plans to keep the museum open late Wednesday, with a hands-on demonstration of NASA educational technology.

The U.S. Postal Service will issue two commemorative stamps at 10 a.m. Wednesday, the anniversary of the July 20, 1969 moon walk by astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin.

Also on Wednesday, the National Space Society and

the Planetarium Society hold a "pioneering the space frontier" dinner. The space society will also host a breakfast for Congress.

But on the same day, the Cato Institute think tank is holding a seminar critical of the U.S. space programme, entitled, "Is NASA the greatest obstacle to space enterprise?"

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As Americans look back with nostalgia at the first moon shot 25 years ago, scientists are looking forward to the next possible time humans might walk on the moon.

The consensus: Not for another 25 years. At least.

"It's not on the radar screen," said Mark Hess, a spokesman for NASA's

much-delayed and redesigned space station, which was once thought to be an essential step in any U.S. return to the moon.

The main reason is cost. "The fiscal priorities are such that it's clear that we are not going to make large financial investments in returning to the moon anytime soon," explained Carl Pilcher, chief of NASA's mission from Planet Earth Study office, where such missions are considered.

Even when Americans go back to the moon, they are unlikely to go alone, Mr. Pilcher said in a telephone interview.

Unlike the Apollo 11 mission that brought the first U.S. astronauts to the moon on July 20, 1969, it is far more likely that any 21st century moon walk will be a global venture involving European and Japanese participation.

In fact, NASA was one sponsor of an international meeting in Switzerland last month on the possibility of future space exploration.

Both the Japanese and European space agencies put forth long-term, four-phase plans, featuring comparatively low start-up costs and work with robots on the moon before any thought of sending a human crew there.

The European plan did not set any date for a human lunar mission. The Japanese theorised that the year 2020

might be a tentative target date.

Mr. Pilcher said that sounded reasonable: "With a programme developing on that kind of timetable, where we start very gradually, the moon is a very plausible next objective."

This is a far cry from the muscular rhetoric of the 1960s, when the race to the moon was fuelled in part by cold war fear that the Soviet Union would get there first.

President John F. Kennedy told Congress in 1961 that landing a man on the moon by the end of that decade "may hold the key to our future on Earth."

He said: "For while we cannot guarantee that we shall one day be first, we can guarantee that any failure to make this effort will make us last."

By 1989, times had changed as the Soviet Bloc showed signs of crumbling. On the 20th anniversary of the first moon landing, an upbeat president George Bush pledged to build a permanent U.S. moon base and go on to Mars in the 21st century.

"Our goal is nothing less than to establish the United States as the pre-eminent space-faring nation," Mr. Bush said.

President Bill Clinton, who won the White House by focusing on domestic policy and the economy, has been

largely mute on the subject of space exploration. Vice President Al Gore has given some inspiring talks, but there has been no specific commitment to a return to the moon by Americans.

Even if there were, there is no existing vehicle — certainly not the ageing space shuttle — that could make the trip. Shuttles do not have the necessary propulsion to get up into low-earth orbit and then push off toward the moon.

The only vehicle that might help get to the moon is the Energia V, designed in the former Soviet Union, which is capable of lifting five times the weight of a U.S. shuttle.

This would be helpful if Mr. Bush's goal for a permanent moon base is reactivated.

For now, NASA is content to focus on unstaffed probes, which are cheaper than human space flights and produce eye-popping visual images that no Earth-bound observers can capture.

In fact, on the 25th anniversary of the moon walk, the real news for astronomers was coming from a former NASA laughingstock: The Hubble space telescope.

The Hubble, with no humans aboard, was taking pictures of Jupiter, just moments after the largest of the fragments of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 smashed into the planet's surface.

Court throws out case due to radio comment

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania (AP) — A court ding state interference threw out charges against three suspects charged with possessing 5.3 tonnes of marijuana. High Court Judge Josephat Mackanja said the trial was prejudiced by a commentary on state-controlled Radio Tanzania on May 24 that said the court was wrong in acquitting a suspect on a similar case. "I am satisfied that the interference in the trial by the executive arm of the government through their (radio) commentary has rendered the trial of the accused persons unfair," Judge Mackanja said.

Despite the court ruling, the suspects were immediately arrested under a law that permits detention without trial of individuals the state considers a threat to public security. International law enforcement agents, including the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, consider Dar Es Salaam one of Africa's main transit points for drugs manufactured in India and Pakistan destined to Europe and North America.

Mehboob Akber, 39, a Tanzanian, Francisco Yoo, 54, who was described in court as being Pakistani, and Fito Ndekelo Ulomi, a former Tanzanian customs officer, were charged with having 5.3 tonnes of marijuana. The prosecution said the haul was worth 8 billion shillings in the local currency, about \$15 million. Judge Mackanja said that due to the commentary, the people were likely to believe the "court and the suspects had struck a deal." If they were convicted, it would appear the court acted on government orders.

French couple thrown out of China

MONTPELLIER, France (AFP) — A French couple were given only hours to pack and leave after being ordered out of China for failing to pay study fees and for receiving foreign visitors, the Foreign Ministry said Saturday.

The couple, studying in Chengdu, in the central province of Sichuan, were thrown out on July 8 along with their two-year-old son. A ministry source gave no further details of their alleged offences. The source said they were given only a few hours to pack their bags before being driven under escort to the airport, where they were put on a plane to Hong Kong. The couple were named as Yanin Boudemagh, 30, Valentine Peyrot, 28, and their son Shamseddine. They were originally from Montpellier, southern France. They were currently in a hotel in Hong Kong, where they contacted the French consulate-general to report the incident, the ministry source said.

Costa Rica to host Transvestite Miss World contest

PANAMA CITY (AFP) — After Panama's president nixed the show, Costa Rica has agreed to host an international transvestite beauty pageant, an organiser said Saturday. "Costa Rica is something of a small town, but the people are more cultured and have overcome all taboos," said the hairdresser Armandou, who as "Miss Colombia" has eight international pageants under his belt. President Guillermo Endara emerged as one of a chorus of voices in Panama outraged by the planned Transvestite Miss World International contest. He threatened to fire the director of the National Institute of Culture for renting out the National Theatre for the event. Then the local Roman Catholic Church weighed in.

High court: all pigeons are equal

HONG KONG (AP) — It's official: All pigeons were created equal. That's the upshot of a ruling by High Court Justice Raymond Sears after the Hong Kong Racing Pigeon Association had argued that racing pigeons should be regarded as pets and not as poultry. The association was contesting a government anti-pollution law that bans individuals from keeping more than 20 pigeons in urban areas. The association said its members have to keep more than 20 pigeons because many are lost on long races and that their birds were raised for racing, not eating. But Justice Sears ruled that racing pigeons could be eaten like other pigeons.

Rwandan rebels to press on with advance

KIGALI (Agencies) — Rwandan rebels will press on with their advance against disintegrating forces of the crumbling government until a new government for the war-torn country is formed, a spokesman said Sunday.

The announcement shattered hopes of an early ceasefire, which would have helped to stem the huge flow of panic-stricken Rwandan refugees fleeing into neighbouring Zaire to escape the RPF advance.

"We will march on until a government is sitting (in the Rwandan parliament)," the spokesman for the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) told Reuters.

Earlier the RPF and the new prime minister-designate, Faustin Twagiramungu, had said a new government would be named by Tuesday.

In Kigali Sunday, RPF troops were busy cleaning the shattered parliament buildings, badly damaged in earlier fighting. The officer in charge said they were preparing the building for use Monday.

On Friday the RPF military chief, Major-General Paul Kagame, told U.N. special representative Shahrar Khan that he was ready to call a ceasefire "within hours" and halt his advance five kilometres (three miles) short of the northwestern border town of Gisenyi, last refuge of the former government.

But panicking refugees on

the border with Zaire, struggling with bundles of clothing, mats and cooking pots, said Sunday they had seen RPF rebels in Gisenyi.

Government soldiers denied this, saying the rebels were still 12 to 20 kilometres away. Soldiers said ministers of the Hutu government had fled south to the area of Cyangugu, inside the protection zone established for civilians under France's Operation Turquoise mercy mission.

The pre-RPF Rwanda reported Saturday that the RPF had reached Gisenyi. Mr. Khan then told reporters that there had obviously been delays in implementing the expected ceasefire.

The RPF advanced Sunday on Gisenyi but did not yet have it under their control, an official of the ousted Rwandan interim government said.

Mortar fire from hills around Gisenyi, just over the border with Zaire, grew louder as the morning passed.

The Rwandan Patriotic Front "continued to shell" the government forces camp at Mukamuramba, about 20 kilometres from Gisenyi, throughout Saturday night, forcing the government troops "to retreat" to a camp at Bigogwe, Aloys Nkundabimana, director general of the Rwandan Interior Ministry, told AFP.

But he could not say if the rebels had actually overrun Mukamuramba.

He described the fighting

as "violent in as much as the government soldiers no longer have enough ammunition."

He said Gisenyi could fall within the next 48 hours if the RPF offensive "did not stop."

Meanwhile fourteen aircraft packed with supplies were to land in Goma, Zaire, Sunday as aid groups present ahead with an emergency airlift for waves of Rwandan refugees crammed into this Zairean border town, U.N. officials said.

The Goma airlift was due to get under way Saturday but only one plane, from a church aid group, was able to land at the town's airport before Sunday, U.N. officials here said.

Overstretched relief organisations, struggling with critical water shortages, have warned of an impending humanitarian catastrophe and appealed urgently for help from the international community.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said at least 600,000 Rwandan refugees — almost 10 per cent of the country's estimated current population — had arrived in Goma between Thursday and late Saturday. The figure marked an increase of 100,000 on previous estimates.

A spokesman for Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF: Doctors Without Borders), said the medical charity had been made responsible for water

supplies in makeshift camps.

Samantha Bolton said the organisation could ferry around 160,000 litres a day into the camps — compared with the 2.5 million litres aid workers estimate as the minimum daily requirement for 500,000 refugees.

The UNHCR, meanwhile, has expressed concern over the thousands of former troops from the Hutu-dominated government army, many of whom are still armed, among the refugees flooding into the town.

Up to a million Rwandans are expected eventually to cross the border into Zaire, mostly Hutus fearing revenge by the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) for earlier massacres.

Ten of the aircraft due Sunday were chartered by the World Food Programme (WFP), the UNHCR said, with two planes carrying 40 tonnes of food each and the other eight bringing in non-food aid.

The military planes were coming from Kampala, Nairobi, Djibouti and Beirut.

Aid convoys were also expected to arrive from Bukavu, the southern Zairean town which has been one of the bases of France's military intervention in the central African country.

In Bonn Sunday, the German Defence Ministry announced its participation in the airlift, saying a Boeing 707 packed with food and other supplies would leave Cologne Airport Monday en

route for Goma.

The UNHCR said a further 300,000 refugees were just across the border in Gisenyi, ready to flee to Zaire if the town falls to the RPF.

Propaganda by the ousted interim Hutu-led government has whipped up fear of the RPF among the mainly Hutu population left in Rwanda.

Other aid organisations say at least 800,000 refugees have surged over the Rwandan-Zairean border in the last few days, with more than a million in the region.

The UNHCR and strained Goma authorities have provided three sites for the refugees.

One, at Katale, 58 kilometres (35 miles) north of Goma, can provide space for 300,000 people. Work was to start Sunday on the site which "has sources of drinking water," officials said.

The second is at Kibumba, 25 kilometres (15 miles) north of Goma, where 200,000 people have already set up home.

The third at Munugi, five kilometres (three miles), outside Kibumba has around 30,000 refugees.

A fourth is planned at Sake, 25 kilometres (15 miles) west of Goma.

Meanwhile the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) said in Nairobi late Saturday it had launched an airlift operation, and that its first Hercules C-130 flight arrived in Goma Saturday afternoon carrying 14 tonnes of food.



Aerial view of Rwandan refugees' vehicles jammed on the road in Zaire after they fled the civil war in their country (AFP photo)

Bosnian Serb 'no' likely for peace plan

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serbs were Sunday expected to vote "no" to the latest international peace plan, defying the most concerted international pressure so far for an end to Bosnia's 27-month war.

The self-styled Bosnian Serb Assembly meets in Pale Monday to debate the plan, which would divide the former Yugoslav republic roughly in half between the Serbs and the Muslim-Croat federation.

The Muslim-Croat joint parliament also meets Monday in nearby Sarajevo to consider the same question, a day before the deadline set by the big powers' "contact group" for the Bosnian rivals to come up with a definitive response.

"We intend to accept the peace plan although it is not good for us," Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic said Saturday.

The major powers have warned the Bosnian Serbs that they face more isolation and more war if they reject the plan.

The presidents of Turkey, Croatia and Bosnia, meeting in Croatia Sunday, urged world powers to get tough with the Bosnian Serbs if they block the latest peace plan.

The United Nations Sunday reported an increase in the number of ceasefire violations around Sarajevo, together with fighting between Serbs and Muslims on the battlefronts of north-central Bosnia and the northwestern Bihać enclave.

While Muslims and Croats have given reluctant approval to the peace proposal, which is backed by the United States, Russia, the European Union and the United Nations, Serb voices were being raised against it.

"They want to wrest some 20 towns from us, as well as major thoroughfares, economic resources, river valleys, but the people are opposed to this and they will probably say no," said Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

"After all the calculations by the world community, we might face a war even bloodier and more difficult

than any war before it," he was quoted as saying Saturday by the Yugoslav News Agency, Tanjug.

Momcilo Krajisnik, the speaker of the Bosnian Serb Assembly, added: "The contact group's plan is certainly not good for us. It may also not be good for the other sides, but it was made primarily to satisfy the Muslims and the Croats, while not much heed was paid to the interests of the Serb side, as was the case on previous occasions."

Bosnian Serb Deputy Prime Minister Vitomir Popovic was even more uncompromising.

"The latest proposal by the contact group for a territorial division and constitutional organisation of former Bosnia-Herzegovina is totally unacceptable for the Serb people and should be rejected in full," he told Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA).

Bosnian Serb Assembly deputies found it unacceptable that the Serbs should be forced to hand over nearly

one third of the land they now hold after more than two years of fighting.

"We will not hand over a single inch of land easily, because we are on our own land," Milos Lero, a deputy from the southeastern town of Bileca, was quoted as saying by Belgrade's Vecernje Novosti newspaper.

In the event of a rejection of the plan, the international community has threatened to increase pressure on the Serbs by tightening economic sanctions and ultimately lifting to the U.S. desire to lift the arms embargo on the Muslims.

Fearing a possible rejection of the peace proposal, United Nations and NATO commanders met in Zagreb Saturday to assess their options if the war goes on.

A senior U.N. official in Sarajevo said Sunday that military planners had agreed that thousands of battle-ready troops would be needed in Bosnia if the peace plan is ever to be implemented.

Bonn alarmed at Russian plutonium smuggling

BONN (R) — Germany has warned that the smuggling of nuclear materials has reached grave new dimensions following the seizure last May of smuggled weapons-grade plutonium which it says came from Russia's nuclear industry.

Chancellor Minister Berndt Schröder told German Television late Saturday that plutonium smuggling had become a matter for serious concern and that both international crime gangs and Russian government officials were involved.

Plutonium 239, six grams (0.21 ounces) of which were contained in a lead cylinder in a mercury mixture totalling 60 grams (2.1 ounces), was found in May in the home of a German businessman in the southwest German city of Stuttgart.

"We have reached a spectacular new dimension," Mr. Schröder said. "Perhaps the most dramatic thing about it is that this material came from Russia's nuclear weapons industry."

He said the find was "identifiable" and could be traced back to its source.

"We are naturally dealing here with mafia — like organisations... also with people in state organisations, who are involved in this area."

Louis Frech, director of America's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), said recently he feared Russian criminal gangs might be able to acquire nuclear weapons and materials and sell them to terrorists.

Western security officials fear nuclear materials could fall into the hands of rebels or armies in militant Third World states or unstable regions such as former Yugoslavia.

The material found in Stuttgart was one of the most radioactive forms of plutonium with a half-life — the time in which the activity of a radioactive substance falls to half its original value — of 24,000 years.

Experts say between 10 and 30 kilograms of plutonium would be needed to make a nuclear device.

Mr. Schröder said the Stuttgart find was probably a sample.

"If it is possible to smuggle in small samples like that, then we must assume that more material could be hidden somewhere," he said.

Nuclear experts expressed deep concern over the find.

"We have reached a new level that should never have been allowed to be reached," Wilhelm Gmelin, director of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) in Luxembourg, told Der Spiegel in the issue that hits the news stands Monday.

Italian coalition government faces breakup over corruption decree

ROME (AFP) — Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi's government faced a major crisis Sunday as the interior minister threatened to quit unless a controversial decree is dropped under which hundreds of corruption suspects can be released from jail.

Interior Minister Roberto Maroni threatened Saturday to leave the three-party government by Sunday night unless Mr. Berlusconi agrees to scrap the decree limiting magistrates' powers to detain suspects.

A meeting of Mr. Maroni's federalist Northern League, one of the three rightwing parties making up the government, will decide Sunday on what attitude to take to the decree and Mr. Maroni's threatened resignation.

The League is the smallest of the three ruling parties, falling to 6.6 per cent of the

vote in the June European polls from 8.3 per cent in national elections in March.

Mr. Berlusconi, who rode to power with his rightist Forza Italia party, vowing to rid politics of corruption, has insisted he will only seek "technical amendments" to the decree which would increase concessions to freedom of former detainees.

Italian press reports Sunday suggested that his intransigence was designed to provoke the League into splitting off from the government thus causing new elections which Mr. Berlusconi would hope to take in a clean sweep.

More than 2,000 people currently being held in connection with corruption probes stand to be released under the decree, which limits judges' powers to detain suspects.

Over the past two years detention has been widely used by judges in the "Clean Hands" probe into rampant corruption against Italian politicians and business leaders.

The probe changed the face of Italian politics, ending hundreds of business and political careers and, ironically, saw Mr. Berlusconi swept into power in March in landmark general elections.

Milan Judge Antonio Di Pietro, a senior figure in the "Clean Hands" anti-corruption campaign, Saturday reiterated his team's earlier decision to resign from the inquiry in protest at the decree.

Quoting official sources, RAI television said nearly 500 suspects had already been released, 50 of them in corruption cases.



Al Arqam Malaysian Islamic movement members pray in the mosque of their headquarters in Sungai Penchala, in the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur (AFP photo)

Malaysian Islamic group runs into storm

SUNGAI PENCHALA, Malaysia (AFP) — Robbed in black, male members of the Al Arqam Malaysian Islamic movement seemed nonchalant in the wake of a government decision that may sound the death knell for their controversial group.

Women followers, their faces covered with black veils, showed the same equanimity towards an announcement by Premier Mahathir Mohammad's administration last week that the Al Arqam movement, with branches in 15 countries, would be banned in its homeland for its deviationist beliefs.

"Islam is Malaysia's official religion, so we will seek our rights as Muslims and if this is denied we will press for our rights under the federal constitution which provides for religious freedom," Mr. Hassan said.

Political analysts said the ban on Al Arqam appeared politically motivated because the movement's influence had reached the corridors of power.

Malaysia's National Fatwa Council, the supreme authority interpreting Islamic tenets, wants Al Arqam banned for challenging some basic religious beliefs, said Hamid Othman, a senior official in Mr. Mahathir's office.

The council's decision, when gazetted into law in mid-August, could devastate Al Arqam's missionary activities, zealously pursued by its 180,000 followers.

Al Arqam's most controversial belief is that an undisputed Islamic leader, the so-called Imam Mahadi, would soon emerge to save all Muslims on earth, government officials charged. They branded the movement a "security threat."

Mr. Hassan, speaking from the group's secretive headquarters in the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, said Al Arqam would seek redress under the constitution if the government imposed the ban next month.

The government has accused the movement's followers of projecting Al Arqam leader Asaari Muhammad as "Imam Mahadi," a charge which Hassan rejected as "baseless."

He said, "if the government says so, it should back it with concrete proof," and dismissed official claims that Al Arqam had set up a suicide squad partly trained in Thailand to defend its beliefs.

Islamic scholars said that the belief in Imam Mahadi was at variance with the Koran, Islam's holy book, and "Sunnah" (the traditions of the Prophet Mohammad).

"Al Arqam has elements of a hero-worship cult. I am particularly disturbed by the almost fanatical hero worship of Asaari," said Chandra Muzaffar, an analyst at the University Sains Malaysia.

"It's frightening because such sort of excessive adulation could lead to violence and bloodshed as exemplified by the David Koresh group in the United States and followers of the Jim Jones cult in Guyana," Mr. Muzaffar said.

Stephen Dorrell, a treasury minister whose political views coincide with Mr. Major's, and Junior Defence Minister Jonathan Aitken.

Youth, rather than experience, is expected to be the watchword of the new cabinet as Conservatives try to counter the threat posed by Mr. Blair, who at 41 is 10 years younger than Mr. Major.

Mr. Blair, Labour's home affairs spokesman, has been hot favourite to succeed John Smith, who died in May, from the start of the six-week campaign. John Prescott, a volatile, valuable left-winger, is set to be named his deputy in the vote by Labour lawmakers, trade unionists and party members.

Many Labour activists regard a Blair-Prescott combination as a "dream ticket" capable of ending Labour's 15 years in opposition at the next election, due by mid-1997.

Mr. Blair, who is on the right of the party, is expected to attract vital middle-class voters while Mr. Prescott keeps the faith with traditional Labour supporters.

German presidency turns EU's focus to E. Europe

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union foreign ministers Monday will debate plans to accelerate the grooming of Eastern European countries for EU membership, a top priority of the bloc's new German presidency.

They will also seek ways to assure the 12-nation union's Mediterranean neighbours that they will not be forgotten in its future expansion.

The session, the first under the chairmanship of German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, will discuss a European Commission report urging Eastern European countries to reform their legal systems and forge closer political contacts with the EU.

The report from the administrative commission, which proposes and enforces policy, is intended to reassure Eastern European countries as they struggle with austerity and put in place new market economies.

The EU pledged in June last year that Eastern European countries having association agreements with Brussels would be admitted as union members once their economic and political reforms had gone far enough to equip them for this role.

Diplomats said Monday's debate could expose differences among member states

on the pace of integration of relations with the EU's former Communist neighbours, partly reflecting sensitivities of vulnerable EU sectors such as agriculture.

Southern EU states believe the commission's goal of creating a Europe-wide market of 450 million people must be matched by initiatives to help Mediterranean basin states facing poverty, high population growth and the risk of Islamic fundamentalism.

Development Commissioner Manuel Marin will report to ministers on the state of negotiations for new EU agreements with Israel, Morocco and Tunisia.

Morocco is taking a hard line and wants better access to the EU for its farm products.

At a ceremony underlining the focus on Eastern Europe, the EU will sign free trade agreements with the Baltic states Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia — an important step on the way to association accords.

Albania may get part of a planned 35 million ECU (\$43 million) loan which Greece has blocked over alleged violations in the Balkan state of ethnic Greeks' rights. Ministers may free less than half the money pending a human rights review.

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Major ponders reshuffle to spike Blair's guns

LONDON (R) — British ministers hovered nervously by their telephones Sunday as Prime Minister John Major prepared a cabinet reshuffle designed to spike the guns of Tony Blair, the opposition Labour Party's heir apparent.

Mr. Blair, a young, telegenic barrister, is all but certain to be appointed Labour Party leader Thursday. Mr. Major wants to face this very potent threat with a new team he hopes will ensure the Conservatives their fifth successive election win. By demoting several underperforming senior ministers and giving his junior line-up a vigorous shake, Mr. Major also hopes to revive the popularity of his Conservative Party which remains stuck 15 points behind Labour in opinion polls.

Just who will get which job in the reshuffle, which could be announced as early as Monday, remains a secret despite feverish speculation among politicians and journalists.

Will a prime minister not known for his bravery demote Treasury Minister Michael Portillo, the young standard-bearer of the party's

troublesome right-wing? Or will he try to "buy" the right-wingers' support by promoting Mr. Portillo and his acolytes?

Mr. Major has taken few colleagues into his confidence and the first hint most ministers receive will come in a telephone call from the prime minister, probably Sunday.

A spokeswoman for the prime minister said he would be spending the day at his home in Huntingdon, eastern England, but hinted Mr. Major may visit a summer party given by best-selling author and Conservative supporter, Lord Archer.

Lord Archer is one of the most important pieces in the reshuffle jigsaw. Until 10 days ago he was firmly tipped to take over as party chairman from Sir Norman Fowler, who resigned last month after Conservative thrashings in council and European elections.

But allegations about Lord Archer's involvement in possible share-buying scam have all but scuppered his chances.

Mr. Major might now try to persuade Trade Secretary Michael Heseltine, a great

favourite among the disillusioned party faithful, to take the job. But he is more likely to turn to Employment Secretary David Hunt.

Chancellor of the Exchequer (Finance Minister) Kenneth Clarke, the most likely successor to Mr. Major, will not be moved and nor will Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd — unless, as some media reports claim, he wants to retire.

Mr. Clarke succeeded Norman Lamont at the last reshuffle in May 1993. Mr. Lamont stormed out of the government, accusing the lacklustre Mr. Major of being a man "with the non-Midas touch."

Home Secretary (Interior Secretary) Michael Howard also seems safe despite a number of bruising defeats in parliament over his plans to shake up the police and justice system.

But other senior ministers, particularly Education Secretary John Patten and Civil Service Minister William Waldegrave, are strongly tipped to be moved down the government ladder.

Two ministers certain to pass them on the way up are

Stephen Dorrell, a treasury minister whose political views coincide with Mr. Major's, and Junior Defence Minister Jonathan Aitken.

Youth, rather than experience, is expected to be the watchword of the new cabinet as Conservatives try to counter the threat posed by Mr. Blair, who at 41 is 10 years younger than Mr. Major.

Mr. Blair, Labour's home affairs spokesman, has been hot favourite to succeed John Smith, who died in May, from the start of the six-week campaign. John Prescott, a volatile, valuable left-winger, is set to be named his deputy in the vote by Labour lawmakers, trade unionists and party members.

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No time for standstill

TWICE THIS century the fate of the peoples of this region was decided by the great powers: after the first and second world wars. Now after the capitalist West won the battle against its rival, the Communist bloc, the destiny of the Middle East is being shaped by the emerging realities of the new world order. But unlike in past decades, this time the people of the region will have a reasonable opportunity to influence the course of events and probably also determine the outcome. For while many may rightly contend that the present nation-state system of the Arab World has been a Western invention, nobody could or should doubt the reality on the ground that resulted from the carving of the Arab region into 22 states plus Israel.

Over the past century each of the 22 Arabisation states has developed its own political, economic and social system. While the peoples of the Arab World might still yearn for unity, that unity will only come after political and economic disparities are removed and free democratic societies are established.

Meanwhile each of the nation-states must strive to fit itself within the emerging new order in the region, where super and regional powers are trying to shape the outcome in their own favour and to their own advantage, Jordan being no exception.

While Israel is trying to assert its role as the sole regional power, Syria is positioning itself to become a U.S. ally in the region and Saudi Arabia is seeking more power over its neighbours. Egypt meanwhile wants to restate itself as the leader of the Arab World, and Iraq, for many years a recognised regional power, will, once the sanctions are lifted, attempt to recover its old role.

Jordan, which must feel sandwiched between ambitious neighbours who want to exploit this country's precarious situation, has to look around carefully and construct for itself a scenario of what might happen in the future, not least of which is the emergence of a Palestinian state next door. Under all circumstances, this country can only consolidate its national and political standing in a way that will protect its future and enhance its social and economic gains. That is why Jordan finds itself propelled to settle, above all, its border issue with Israel and in the future with the other neighbours including the Palestinians.

The Jordanian people who stood for Arab unity throughout their history cannot afford to be ignored or neglected by either Arabs or Israelis in the process leading to the formulation of the new regional order. Only when the disparities among the Arab states are removed and democracy and freedom institutionalised can Jordan fully trust proper integration with the rest of the Arab World. Likewise, it cannot be confident that the Israelis will be charitable when the issue at stake is other people's rights and legitimate interests. Jordan, therefore, has to make room for manoeuvre, and its policies have to remain pragmatic enough in order not to lose out in the game of politics that is being played so fiercely and loudly in the Middle East today. Those Jordanians who want to bury their head in the sand, for ideological or whatever reasons, can do so with their full democratic rights protected and respected. But they won't force the country into a standstill from now on. History moves much faster than they think.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE RAI daily said Sunday that Jordan is entering one of the most critical stages of its history as it is taking very important steps towards securing a better future for its future generations. The current moves in the peace process are undertaken at a time when the Arab countries' destiny is being shaped by foreign nations, when Arab states' economies are controlled by other nations and when these Arab states are in total disarray, said the daily. We are entering the most difficult phase in our history and are forced to take the most difficult course because we have a very narrow margin for manoeuvring and few cards to play at a time when the Arab World lacks the military might and a pan-Arab strategy that can be useful in times of war or peace, said the paper. It is natural to see conflicting views revolving around the coming stage and its implications, but it is also reasonable to say that the situation must be handled wisely, said the paper. It said that one of the basic elements that should be safeguarded and upheld is national unity which is capable of helping the Jordanian people overcome any challenge. National unity and democracy helped the Kingdom overcome all the other challenges and hardships of the past and, said the paper, this unity, under democracy is bound to help the country deal with the challenges looming ahead.

Human Rights File

IHRC recommends inclusion of ICCPR in domestic law

Jordan's report to human rights committee: 'Low key, lacking depth'

THE CONSIDERATION of Jordan's third periodic report to the International Human Rights Committee in Geneva a few days ago was a low-key affair. The absence of non-governmental organisations, whether Jordanian or international, has deprived the committee members of the in-depth information that could have served as a basis for a thorough examination of the human rights situation in Jordan within the context of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

The Jordanian case was presented by Supreme Court judge Fahad Al Uthum who gave a thorough legal presentation of the Jordanian scene. Yet the kind of probing that Jordan's report received was artificial. Neither the positive developments nor the remaining shortcomings in the country were touched upon in depth. There was even an absence of spectators. Usually many observers attend when country reports under the Covenant are considered by the members of the human rights body.

The committee has formulated its final comments on the Jordanian situation and is in the process of adopting them. I personally did not take part in the debate in conformity with the established practice that nationals of the countries whose report is being examined would not take part in the dialogue. Nevertheless, I present herewith the draft final comments of the committee:

Comments of the Human Rights Committee (Jordan)

A. Introduction

The committee welcomes the opportunity to continue its dialogue with the state party and thanks the Government of Jordan for its report (CCPR/C/76/Add.1) and core document (HRCORE/1/Add.18/Rev.1). It notes that the report and core document did not contain sufficient information on the effective implementation of the provisions of the Covenant. However, the presence of a high-level delegation which provided additional information on many points not covered in the report enabled the committee to obtain a better understanding of the human rights situation in Jordan and thus provided the basis for a frank and fruitful dialogue between the delegation and the committee.

B. Factors and difficulties affecting the application of the Covenant

The committee takes note of the difficult economic and social situation faced by Jordan as a result of the Gulf crisis and lack of stability in the region. The presence of a very large number of refugees constitutes another factor which renders the implementation of the Covenant more difficult.

C. Positive aspects

The committee welcomes the lifting of the state of emergency and the abolition of the Martial Law and the 1935 Defence Act, as well as the release of political prisoners, restitution of withdrawn passports, reinstatement of civil servants who had been dismissed for political reasons and the institution of a right to appeal against decisions of the State Security Court. The committee also notes with satisfaction the establishment in 1992 of an appeal procedure to the High Court of Justice against administrative decisions, including those concerning civil servants. The efforts to undertake a thorough legal reform have already yielded many accomplishments, in particular with respect to the new Press Act and Political Parties Act. The committee also appreciates the creation of a commit-

tee for human rights and the establishment of Jordanian sections of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights and Amnesty International. These new institutions and the drafting of human rights legislation and other new bills, as well as the holding of multiparty elections, clearly illustrate the positive trend towards strengthening democracy and the promotion and protection of human rights in Jordan. Some progress made in recent years in promoting the status of women is also commendable and the notable achievements in the field of life expectancy together with reduction of child mortality rates are positive developments ensuring better respect of the right to life as provided for under article 6 of the Covenant.

D. Principal subjects of concern

The committee regrets that the precedence of the international instruments, including the Covenant, over the Constitution or domestic legislation, is not enshrined in the Constitution. Furthermore, it notes with concern that the general legal framework is still not in full conformity with the provisions of the Covenant. The committee also regrets that the Constitutional Court has not yet been established.

The committee is concerned that the State Security Court and military courts continue to exercise special jurisdiction and that, in accordance with articles 124 and 125 of the Constitution and under the new Defence Act, ordinary law can be suspended in emergency situations, contrary to the provisions of article 4 of the Covenant which prohibits derogation from some categories of human rights. The lack of clarity with regard to accountability for acts performed under provisions of the Martial Law is also a matter of concern.

The committee regrets that, although some improvement has been achieved as regards the status of women, the state party has not embarked on all the necessary reforms to combat the factors still impeding equality between men and women. It notes with concern that the Constitution does not expressly guarantee the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of sex, and that there are still gender disparities in practice with regard to such issues as status within the family, inheritance rights, the right to leave the country, the acquisition of Jordanian nationality, access to work and participation in public life.

The committee is concerned about the excessive number of offences punishable by the death penalty as well as the number of death sentences handed down by the courts.

The committee is also concerned that the guarantees contained in articles 7, 9, 10 and 14 of the Covenant are not fully complied with; that torture and ill-treatment of persons deprived of liberty continue to be reported; and that confessions under duress are not expressly excluded as evidence. Cases of administrative detention, denial of access of detainees to legal counsel, long periods of re-trial detention without charges and incommunicado detention are also matters of great concern. The committee is particularly concerned at conditions of detention in the General Intelligence Department headquarters.

The committee also notes with concern the shortcomings in the observance of the provisions of Article 18 of the Covenant, in particular the restrictions affecting the enjoyment by non-recognised or non-registered religious denominations, including the Bahais, of their right to freedom of religion. Concern is also expressed about the practical limitations to the right to have or adopt a religion or belief of one's choice, which should include the freedom to change religion.

The committee also expresses concern that in spite of the positive developments resulting from the adoption of the new Press Act, freedom of expression is still restricted by

the control exercised by the authorities over the state radio and television and by measures of harassment against some journalists. The committee is also concerned that a rigid interpretation of the provisions of the new Press Act and Political Parties Act might jeopardise the effective enjoyment of those rights stipulated under articles 18 and 25 of the Covenant.

The committee also regrets that the provisions of Article 27 of the Covenant are not fully implemented in Jordan.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

The committee recommends that the state party continue its thorough legislative review with a view to incorporating all substantive provisions of the Covenant into domestic law and ensure that the restrictions imposed under national legislation do not go beyond those permitted under the Covenant.

The committee hopes that the Government of Jordan will consider becoming a party to the First Optional Protocol to the Covenant.

The committee further recommends that Jordan envisage measures towards the abolition of the death penalty and accession to the Second Optional Protocol.

The committee emphasises the need for the government to prevent and eliminate discriminatory attitudes and prejudices towards women and to achieve the effective implementation of article 3 of the Covenant, by adopting promotional measures to overcome the weight of certain traditions and customs.

The committee recommends that consideration be given to the abolition of the State Security Court and the military courts; that the detention premises controlled by the Central Intelligence Department be placed under close supervision of the judicial authorities; that necessary measures be taken to prevent torture, ill-treatment and illegal detention and that all such cases be investigated in order to bring before the courts those suspected of having committed such acts. It also recommends that measures of administrative detention and incommunicado detention be restricted to very limited and exceptional cases, and that the guarantees concerning pre-trial detention provided for in Article 9, paragraph 3, of the Covenant be fully implemented.

The committee emphasises the need to take further measures to guarantee the freedom of religion and eliminate discrimination on religious grounds, and suggests in this connection that the state party take into account the recommendations contained in the committee's general comment on Article 18 of the Covenant.

The committee stresses that further measures should be taken to ensure that the provisions of the Covenant be made more widely known. It urges the government to prepare its fourth periodic report in compliance with the guidelines for the preparation of state party reports, taking into account the general comments adopted by the committee. The fourth-periodic report should contain detailed information on the extent to which each right protected under the Covenant is enjoyed in practice, and refer to specific factors and difficulties that might impede its application. It should also highlight measures taken to follow up on the committee's suggestions and recommendations.

The committee recommends that the Jordanian authorities should ensure that the report submitted by the state party and the comments of the committee be disseminated as widely as possible in order to ensure the involvement of all sectors concerned in the improvement of human rights.

Palestinians and Israelis, side by side into unknown future

By Abraham Rabinovich

GAZA — The streets are as unkempt as ever and Arabic graffiti still cover virtually every wall, but Gaza is a transformed city. The glaze of suppressed emotions that gave it its surliness has dissipated with the Israeli pullout two months ago. The arrival of Yasser Arafat as leader in residence has stabilised a surreal situation created by the overnight end to 27 years of occupation.

"This place is going to be another Paris" is a phrase one hears repeatedly, as if some irresistible peddler of dreams had passed through the alleys of Gaza, alleys coated with drifting sand and neglect. It is a time for dreaming, an interval of calm and mind-drift between a stormy day just ended and a

new one whose nature is not yet apparent. A moment when everything is still possible. Mindsets of a lifetime have been set aside, albeit within easy retrieval if needed.

Among Palestinians revelling in a hitherto unknown "normality" — masters, almost of their own fate — the sense of pride is palpable. There is an ease about them that makes Israeli reporters who venture into the Gaza Strip, with armed Palestinians on every hand, feel safer than they did when Israeli soldiers patrolled the sullen streets.

The Israeli-Palestinian divorce, even though it is not yet finalised, is freeing both sides from the psychological imperative that obliged them to regard each other as mortal enemies. Israeli television and, to a

lesser extent, print media have played a major role in the past year in de-demonising the Palestinians, including those who were the backbone of the intifada. The public has been introduced to these figures emerging from detention camps, exile or hiding and seen them to be articulate, distinctive, generally sympathetic personalities. Most speak good Hebrew, learned either while working in Israel or in Israeli prisons.

For the average Israeli listening to them express hopes for coexistence, the subliminal message is that the enemy is a human being, not that much different from himself. This does not make him less a potential enemy if interests clash, but it does render him, for the first time in the eyes of many Israelis, a

potential neighbour. Even Yasser Arafat has emerged into the Israeli consciousness with a human aspect — an eccentric and not uninteresting personality, shrewd enough to have survived against all odds, plainly the only Palestinian leader at this stage with whom Israel can hope to make a sustainable deal.

The Israeli right wing staged a mass rally in Jerusalem earlier this month around the slogan "Stop Arafat the arch murderer." The rally drew some 100,000 people, but almost all were from the religious right. The slogan plainly failed to stir the bulk of right-wing voters, let alone the left.

Israelis and Palestinians are at a subtle, shifting interface. The majority of Palestinians, in whose name the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)

speaks, profess a readiness to waive their claims to the whole of the land and to settle down in peace alongside the Jewish state. There are few Israelis, even in the ultra-liberal wing, who do not believe that in the back of their minds the Palestinians still hope that one day, perhaps generations hence, the Arabs will succeed in ridding the Middle East of this "foreign intrusion, as Israel is labelled.

The Palestinians, for their part, are conscious of Israel's power and aware

that it will use it massively if it feels itself threatened.

Thus, while both sides are relaxed enough to contemplate coexistence, they are aware that tribal interests may one day transform the other side, Bosnia-style, back into a mortal enemy. Into this ambiguity, with the maternity hequeathed by living with dilemmas that have no solutions, Palestinians and Israelis march side by side toward what awaits them — International Herald Tribune.

LETTER

Violence on JTV

To the Editor:

AT A time when the world is fighting violence on TV, Jordan Television seems to have a strange interest in movies involving different forms of violence and crime. Some Jordanian families would spend a Thursday evening watching Channel 2's late night movie. As everybody is anticipating the form of entertainment JTV has in store for them, surprisingly, they're faced by a traffic story about someone being either killed, raped or robbed.

This form of entertainment might appeal to some people, but variety is still needed, and a family has a right to enjoy watching a movie "together."

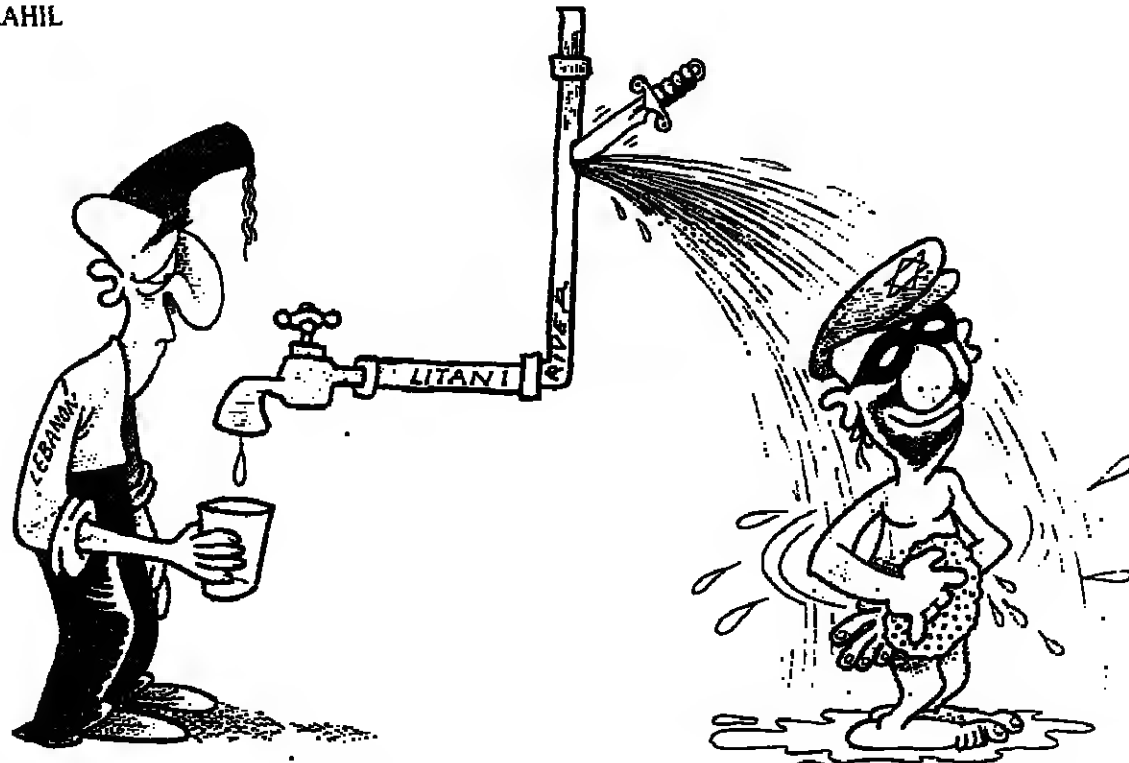
Viewers of the late night movie on JTV's Channel 2, have become acquainted with the "no children" sign, and that is quite ridiculous, especially that the movie business is stacked with films which are lighthearted and are capable of easing some of the tension and frustration which accumulate over a hard week.

One cannot deny the impact of today's media on our young generation. It would be naive to believe that by screening the "no children" sign, teenagers will shut their TV sets and go to bed. These movies have the most negative effect on our children and it is a shame that JTV would contribute to disturbing our youth.

It is true that rape and murder are a part of today's world. Still, I don't believe it is necessary for our society to become so familiar with such horrible aspects of our life. This is a plea to JTV to rethink the type of movies it presents to people, keeping in mind the values which we want to pass on to our children. The young generation is expected to bring peace and stability in today's world and make it a better place to live in. It is the responsibility of all of us, including JTV.

Yara Sahri,
Amman.

M. KAHIL



King voices appreciation

(Continued from page 1)

continue their support of the King's leadership.

In a reply letter to the King, Prime Minister Majali thanked King Hussein, saying that the Royal message "is a medal of trust" for him and his colleagues in the Cabinet. Dr. Majali pledged to work with dedication to serve the Hashemite throne and Jordan.

"It is a great honour for all those soldiers working for the honourable peace battle to receive your attention and noble directives," Dr. Majali said.

"The faithful soldiers in the peace battle pledge to follow" the King's shining

example in building, work, dedication, sacrifice and to follow the Hashemite tradition, based on vision, far-sightedness and wise decisions, he said.

"Upon Your Majesty's directives, the Jordanian delegation has done its utmost and has worked day and night, searching, discussing and analysing so that their ideas will be coordinated, their words will be sure and reliable and their purposes will be crystal-clear in order to be able to regain their right and achieve a just, comprehensive and durable peace, thus contributing to the shaping of a promising future for Jordan and the Arab Nation," Dr. Majali said.

Jordan, Israel open talks

(Continued from page 1)

be put in place, Dr. Muasher said. He rejected Israeli assertions that the 1928 boundaries existed only in paper.

On Jordan's quest for the restoration of its water rights, the spokesman said: "Water is the key for carrying out future projects. It is difficult to talk about water projects before we secure our water rights."

"Failure to reach an agreement on water sharing will permit Israel to draw as much water it wants," he said.

Jordan insists that the peace talks agenda be treated in its entirety as a package and not be divided into components, he said. "All subjects in the agenda have the same importance and should be satisfactorily addressed before talking about peace agreements."

Dr. Muasher said Jordan was going ahead with the peace talks on the clear understanding that a just, comprehensive and durable peace will be achieved on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, and the bilateral talks should not be seen in isolation from a comprehensive solution.

The talks are due to open at 10:00 a.m. (0700 GMT) on Monday, with speeches by the Jordanian and Israeli delegation chiefs, Fayez Tarawneh and Eliakim Rubinstein, respectively.

Negotiations will continue at the same time on Tuesday and will end around Monday.

Discussing logistics and preparations for Monday's talks, Dr. Muasher said Israel had also agreed to cut the number of its delegates from 15 to 11 to match Jordan's negotiations team.

Jordanian and Israeli army bulldozers which normally face each other across the ceasefire line have been jointly flattening the ground for the past week.

Soldiers have been busy erecting tents for the delegations and installing electricity and telephone equipment.

Every detail — from which delegation will provide lunch, to a Jordanian request for water jugs without Israeli labels — has been arranged. Both sides have also agreed not to have any flags at the site of the talks.

A final preparatory meeting Sunday hammered out the agreements on procedure.

"The atmosphere was very cordial and the Israeli delegates were cooperative," said Jordanian Foreign Ministry official Omar Rifai.

Other technical points that have been known to disrupt peace talks were also ironed out Sunday. Even the negotiating tables have been positioned so that the Jordanian team sits on their side of the border and the Israelis on theirs.

Eight parties reject

(Continued from page 1)

ton and Tel Aviv in their drive to deal separately with the Arab states and to impose their own terms which are designed to serve American and Israeli interests at the expense of Arab national rights.

"The recent agreement in Washington has added a new dimension to what has been known as the official Jordanian principled stand, in that it has ignored the Palestine refugee problem, which was listed on the Jordanian-Israeli common agenda signed in late September," said the statement.

"These agreements with Israel represented an acceleration of steps towards normalisation of relations and eventual peace with Israel without any commitment to safeguarding Arab rights and with obvious relinquishing of Arab historic rights in Palestine," the statement asserted.

The July 18 meeting, in addition to the Washington meeting, of July 25, are bound to add more dimensions to the negotiations, representing a fresh Israeli breach of Arab ranks, coming in the wake of another breach represented in the Oslo and Cairo agreements which were detrimental to Palestinian national rights," it asserted.

"These agreements with Israel are bound to provide justifications to the other Arab regimes to establish economic and political rela-

tions with Israel before the latter withdraws its forces from Arab lands, thus endangering pan-Arab rights and interests," continued the statement.

"Our masses, with all their national and Islamic movements, will not be taken in by the policies of and the promises given by the government because they are all deceptive and misleading, and the coming days will prove that the promises of a prosperous economy and the solution of economic crisis are mere illusions and false," it charged.

"These real dangers facing our people require from all the national and Islamic forces to join ranks and pool their efforts and to safeguard and enhance national unity," the statement said.

The statement called for meetings to express "rejection of all normalisation policies and capitulation and press the demand for full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands including Jerusalem and the restoration of all Jordanian and Palestinian people's rights."

The parties which signed the statement were: The Islamic Action Front, the National Action Front, the Jordanian Arab Socialist Baath Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Party, the Jordanian Communist Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, the Jordan Arab Democratic Party, and the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party.

Israelis kill 2 in stampede

(Continued from page 1)

attacked the Israeli-owned gas station and overran the bus terminal, stealing some buses and burning more than 20.

A witness said Israeli soldiers inside the burned-out bus terminal exchanged fire with Palestinian police who were deployed in the sand dunes outside the terminal building. One Palestinian soldier was wounded and taken away by ambulance, said the witness, reporter Ibrahim Barzak.

"They were shooting at our forces. A Palestinian policeman took cover behind the gas station and shot at our forces," said Avi Farhan, an

Israeli who was trapped in the shooting.

"The Israelis were the ones who started the shooting so we had to defend ourselves and we fired back at them," said Lieutenant Amar Fayad, one of those who participated in the shooting.

"We are only flesh and blood. When you see one of your own being shot, you cannot stand and watch," said another Palestinian policeman at the scene who declined to give his name.

Uri Dromi, spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government, said PLO police fired indiscriminately at both Palestinians and Israeli troops, causing most of the casualties.

Czechs avoid old-guard resurgence in East Europe

By Ondrej Hejma

The Associated Press

PRAGUE, Czech Republic — The revolution that swept away the Berlin Wall and the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe has flagged after five years. Only the Czechs have resisted bringing back the old guard or its heirs.

In Lithuania, Poland and now Hungary, former Communists have regained power from intellectuals and ex-dissidents with promises of better management and less economic hardship.

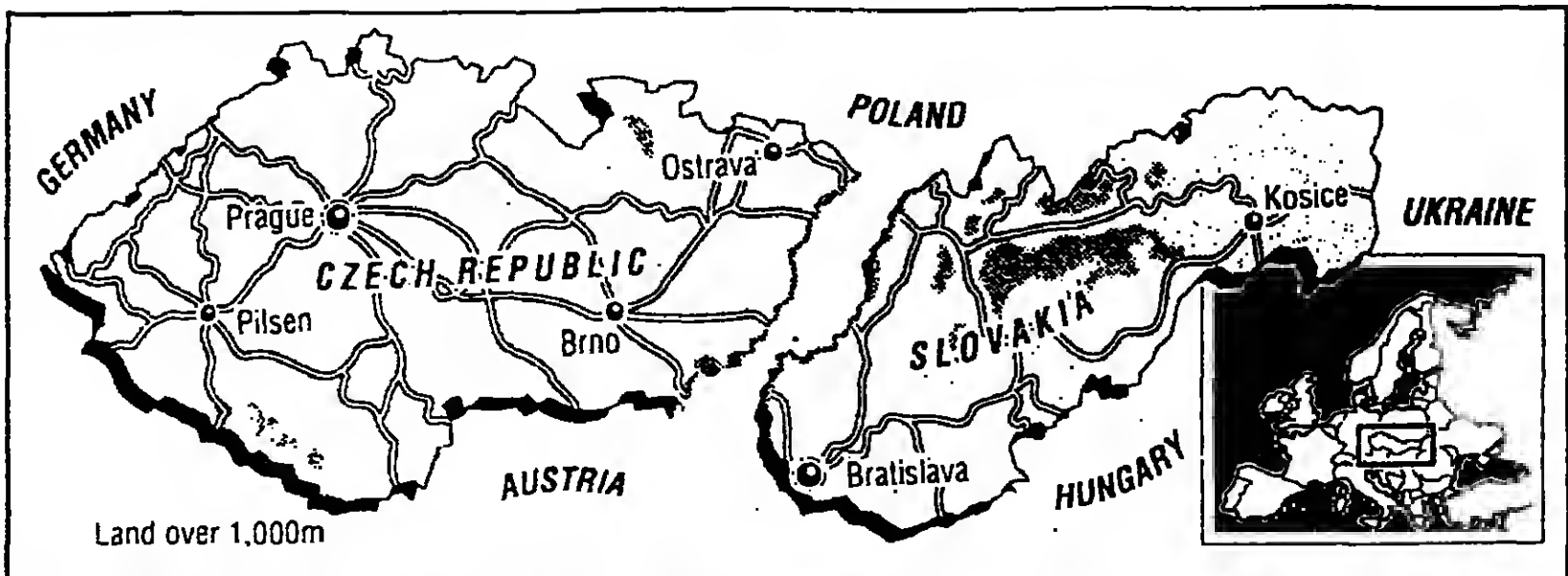
In Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia, Communists or their heirs help keep governments in power.

It's different in the Czech Republic, where those who gained power after the fall have kept it. In his quest for equality with the prosperous Western democracies, Premier Vaclav Klaus is aided by two factors that set his country apart from its neighbours: a weak opposition and an entrepreneurial tradition.

In 1989-1990, while new leaders elsewhere wavered, Mr. Klaus plunged into taking the economy private.

"We were running a 100-metre dash," said Tomas Jizek, a former privatisation minister. "Our aim was to get past the 50-metre mark before the lawyers caught us."

There were few rules in those transitional days, he said, and the reformers



Land over 1,000m

could not afford to be slowed by legal wrangles.

As the vehicle for their economic revolution, Mr. Klaus and his aides devised a coupon system that gave every adult citizen a stake in state-owned companies. They could either put their coupons into an investment fund or trade them for shares in specific companies.

"If you lower people's standard of living at a time of such huge transformation, in return you must offer something that makes sense," said Dusan Triska, an architect of the plan.

"We gave them free access and direct participation." There are now 5 million shareholders and 850,000

entrepreneurs among the 10 million Czechs, some of whom remember the market economy before the Communist takeover in 1948. Czechoslovakia, dissolved peacefully last year, had the only democracy in Eastern Europe between the world wars.

Their history of democracy and 200 years of industrialisation influenced by neighbouring Germany also made the Czechs fiscally prudent. Czechoslovakia emerged from Communism with the smallest foreign debt in Eastern Europe.

Economically, the Czechs appear to have gained from the break with Slovakia, shedding the third of the country with the

highest unemployment and most of the unprofitable state industries.

Standard and poor's and Moody's rate the Czech Republic as the best investment risk in Eastern Europe.

Polis consistently give Mr. Klaus and his conservative government approval ratings of more than 60 per cent. He is seen as the father of economic reform and his approach appeals to the pragmatic Czechs.

Czech Communists finished a distant second to the premier's Civic Democratic Party in the 1992 elections. They have barely broken with the past, not even dropping the designation Communist, as have

their counterparts elsewhere.

In the 1980s, while reform-minded Communists nudged Poland and Hungary towards freedom, Czechoslovakia was run by aging apparatchiks installed after the Soviet invasion that ended the liberal "Prague Spring" of 1968.

"The Communists did not change and have no chance of a future electoral success," said Vaclav Zak of the Centrist Free Democrats.

Opposition Social Democrats also seem to be getting nowhere against Mr. Klaus.

Still, the reorganisation of newly private companies could upset his cozy mix of free-market rhetoric ha-

lanced by enough government spending to keep unemployment below 5 per cent and inflation lowest in the region.

If there is a surge in layoffs, ordinary Czechs could come to view economic reform as a return of the class and wealth differences the Communists claimed to have destroyed.

Mr. Klaus appears to count on the Western democracies, despite frequently chastising them for not embracing the newly freed Eastern economies.

He has said his government will apply for membership in the European Union (EU) before 1996, the year of the next elections.

Ex-warrior turns to new business: Kidnapping

By Rahimullah Yusufzai

The Associated Press

KALAT, Afghanistan — From his mountain hideout in these lawless badlands, warlord Mullah Abdul Salam Rocketi has made himself the kidnapping king of Afghanistan.

The stocky, bearded Rocketi, who controls some 200 fighters and a remarkable array of high-tech weaponry, presently holds captive two Chinese engineers and eight Pakistanis, including the deputy commissioner of Pakistan's Western Ziarat District.

His demands: 6.7 million rupees (\$225,000) and the return of three U.S.-made, Stinger anti-aircraft missiles he claims the Pakistani security forces stole from him.

"I know he is an unequal battle because the Pakistan government is like a mountain and I would hurt myself if I keep knocking my head against it," Rocketi, 35, told the Associated Press in an interview at a mosque outside Kalat, the capital of

the southeastern province of Zabol.

"But I have no other choice than to fight to redeem my honour," added Rocketi, who goes by the nickname pinned on him for his love of modern weapons.

Rocketi was among the many mujahedeen leaders who battled to drive the Soviet forces out of Afghanistan in 1989, after a decade of occupation, and then helped topple the Communist government in 1992.

But the fragmented mujahedeen have since battled among themselves in a savage civil war. They have destroyed the capital of Kabul and left the central Asian nation without a functioning government.

Most of the outlying areas have become the fiefdoms of local warlords such as Rocketi, a shadowy figure who rarely shows his face around these farming villages where almond and apple orchards abound.

Rocketi said his feud with Pakistan began last year when three of his Stinger

missiles were taken by Pakistani paramilitary forces who raided his home in Badini. The border town is just inside Pakistan, and was used by Rocketi as a safe haven during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

In addition, one of Rocketi's brothers was arrested and another one was killed in the raid. A furious Rocketi vowed revenge and promptly began his kidnapping spree.

"Why did they raid my house? What was my crime?" said Rocketi. "I still haven't got an answer for my questions."

He has accumulated 10 hostages, all of them kept in a one-room adobe hut. They are chained most of the time and sleep on mattresses on a dirt floor. Rocketi's soldiers brought the men from the hut to the nearby mosque for an interview.

"We are kept in a small, dark room. It's hot during the day and cold at night," complained Zarwali Khan, a member of Pakistan's paramilitary Frontier Corps

who was kidnapped 15 months ago.

The Chinese engineers, captured year ago while working on a water development project in western Pakistan, said they haven't been able to make contact with their families.

"The food is terrible, the treatment is rough. We haven't been able to write to our families," said one of the Chinese hostages.

Aja Mohammad, the deputy commissioner from Pakistan who was taken in March, complained about a lack of medical care that has aggravated his kidney ailment. All looked scruffy and said they rarely were allowed to wash.

Rocketi's men are using the deputy commissioner's official jeep, which they took during the kidnapping. It still sports Pakistan's green and white national flag.

Rocketi claims the Pakistanis are trying to infiltrate his camp to kill him, but says he's prepared. He claims he still has a number of Stinger missiles and also says he has mortars, land-

mines and multi-barrel rocket-launchers.

As Talib, a young fighter guarding the base, warned: "We 200 fighters would strike at sensitive targets anywhere in Pakistan and kidnap senior government officials if any harm came to Mullah Salam Rocketi."

Pakistan has urged Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani to put pressure on Rocketi, who belongs to a faction allied with the president.

But Mr. Rabbani has not proved helpful. His army is engaged in daily combat with rival factions to maintain its hold on the capital. And he recently named Rocketi as the corps commander for Zabol province, though the title has little meaning.

The Stinger is considered a particularly frightful weapon, because the shoulder-held missile is mobile, easy to operate, and extremely deadly. The U.S. government and others fear a terrorist group could use them to shoot down commercial airplanes.

Rocketi obtained the Stingers during the 1980s, when the U.S. CIA was distributing the weapons to the Afghan resistance movement to shoot down Soviet helicopters.

Of the 1,000 Stingers that were believed to be banded out, only about 300 to 400 were fired in combat, according to sources who requested anonymity.

The CIA now wants to buy back the unused Stingers, but has had little success.

The CIA has earmarked \$65 million to purchase the remainder — about \$100,000 per missile, which is far more than they cost to produce.

But there have been few takers. Most of the missiles are believed to be in the hands of Afghan warlords, though there are fears the Afghans will sell the weapons to other countries, such as Iran or Iraq.

Rocketi says he has no plans to sell his remaining Stingers. When asked how many he owned, he said bluntly, "enough."

Gays fighting for political office face backlash

By Alan Elsner

Reuters

WASHINGTON — Openly homosexual candidates are running for political office in U.S. national, state and local elections in greater numbers this year than ever before.

That's one side of the coin. The other is that they face a bitterly hostile reception from an array of conservative politicians and radical Christian groups.

"There's an unprecedented amount of anti-gay rhetoric. It aims to inflame passions, scare people and raise funds for radical groups," said William Waybourn, director of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, an organisation designed to help gay candidates win political office.

This year, the Victory Fund has endorsed 25 candidates for various races to be decided in mid-term elections Nov. 8 and has raised nearly \$300,000.

The candidates include Karen Burstein, running for New York state attorney general, Tony Miller, running for California secretary of state and Tom Duane, the U.S. first openly HIV positive candidate to run for Congress.

Mr. Duane is running for the House of Representatives in a heavily gay district in Manhattan. He faces a Democratic primary Sept. 13.

But Mr. Waybourn said gays still had a long way to go. He noted there were no openly gay members of the Senate and only two of 425 members of the House of Representatives were avowed homosexuals — Gerry Studds and Barney Franks, both from Mas-



Marchers leave the Stonewall Bar June 26 as they make their way towards Central Park to mark the 25th anniversary of the riots that started the Gay Liberation movement (AFP photo)

sachusetts.

Of almost half a million elected officials currently serving in the United States, only 120 were openly gay or lesbian, according to a recent count by the Victory Fund.

Yet, even as homosexuals strive to raise their level of representation, powerful forces are mobilising against them. Six states — Idaho, Missouri, Arizona, Michigan, Washington and Oregon — will vote on propositions seeking to restrict gay rights in some way in

November.

For example, the Idaho initiative would repeal and block laws and policies which prohibit discrimination against lesbian, gay and bisexual citizens, prohibit same-sex marriage and domestic partnerships, ban discussing homosexuality in schools and the use of public funds to express acceptance of homosexuality.

It would allow employers to consider sexual orientation as a factor in personnel decisions. A similar initiative was passed in Colorado

but was overturned by the courts.

"It's a veiled attempt to marginalise a segment of the population," said Mr. Waybourn bitterly. "Hitler proved that if you can marginalise a segment of society, then you can get away with murder against them."

Victory Fund Political Director Kathleen Debold saw a more sinister motive. "The abortion issue has lost its effect as a rallying cry for the radical right so they've switched to gay-bashing," she said.

She pointed to the activi-

ties of a host of fundamentalist Christian and right-wing organisations. One of these is the Family Research Institute, a Virginia-based group seeking to raise money for studies of what it says is the disastrous social and moral effects of homosexuality.

A recent handout from this group, which carries the name of the new Hampshire Republican Senator Robert Smith and California Republican Representative Robert Dornan on its letterhead, warns: "They have sodomised our sons" and asks: "How long can our country survive this massive surrender to an aggressive and hate-driven minority?"

Institute Chairman Paul Cameron, who holds a doctorate in psychology from the University of Colorado, told Reuters his data showed that homosexuals were not only more at risk than heterosexuals of contracting diseases like AIDS, but also less likely to pay income tax, more likely to indulge in crime, both petty and serious, and had inferior driving habits.

U.S. central bank tugged in many directions on rates

WASHINGTON (R) — People tugging on the sleeve of Federal Reserve (Fed) Board Chairman Alan Greenspan want him to go in different directions.

The politician is saying: "Leave interest rates alone because I need to be reelected in November."

The currency trader is saying: "Push them up again to prop up the sagging dollar."

The businessman says: "Don't do it, because I'm finally making more profits." As for Mr. Greenspan, unofficially known as the second most powerful man in America next to President Clinton, he says the country is experiencing "ideal" economic times.

"The U.S. economy has recently been experiencing the ideal combination of rising activity, falling unemployment and slowing inflation," Mr. Greenspan told a bipartisan commission on government spending and tax reform Friday.

It helps set the stage for Mr. Greenspan's appearance Wednesday before the Senate Banking Committee and Friday before a House Banking Subcommittee to deliver his semi-annual "Humphrey-Hawkins report" on the economy.

If Mr. Clinton has the power to launch missiles, then Mr. Greenspan can trigger explosions throughout global financial markets with his words as the central banker wielding authority to set monetary policy for the world's largest economy.

Four times in 1994 the Fed has boosted interest rates in a bid to sustain the U.S. expansion, raising the federal funds rate a total 1-1/4 points to 4.25 per cent and the discount rate to 3.5 per cent.

Yet analysts say the economy's direction is murky enough that it is hard to measure whether interest rates are so far above the inflation genie or if and when the central bank may administer another dose of

bitter medicine.

Government reports issued last week showed prices at the producer and consumer levels either flat or rising only modestly in June, a balm for jittery financial markets.

Industrial output increased for a 13th straight month in June, the Fed said, but only because hot weather boosted electricity generation for air conditioning, so there was little worry there of an overheating economy.

But ongoing doubts evidently remain.

"In all the reports, there's enough ambiguity so that it's difficult to get a sense of how much the economy is slowing and if it is slowing enough to head off more Fed action," said economist Daryl Delano

of Cahners Economics Inc. in Newton, Massachusetts.

"Everybody now is watching world oil prices but I don't think there's enough happening on the domestic front to justify another move up in interest rates in the short term," Mr. Delano said.

The White House last week forecast moderate but steady economic growth with subdued inflation for the next five years, predicting 3.6 per cent growth in national goods and services output this year compared with three per cent last year.

That sounded like a prescription for no more, or at least very modest, interest rate rises. Business was prospering, with record second-quarter earnings at Chrysler Corp. and big gains

for corporate titans like Philip Morris companies.

If there was a skunk at the garden party, it likely was the beleaguered dollar that remains under pressure against Japan's yen and Germany's mark. So Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen pledged the administration's co-operation — admittedly of an unspecified nature — to strengthen it.

Analysts said that could be taken as a signal that the White House would be tolerant of another small round of interest rate rises before congressional elections in November if it was warranted by emerging inflation.

However, that didn't mean the administration wants more rises.

OECD reaches deal to axe shipbuilding subsidies

PARIS (R) — Major shipbuilding outfits Sunday agreed after five years of negotiations to scrap subsidies to their shipyards, but France rejected the deal, negotiators said.

The accord between officials of the United States, European Union (EU), Japan, Korea and Nordic states was hammered out in Paris at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and is seen as the widest pact yet to impose discipline on the ailing industry, delegates said.

"If we had failed there would have been a subsidy war, that is quite clear," said the Swedish ambassador to the Paris-based OECD, Stefan Solman, who chaired the final round of the five-year talks.

The unsigned agreement must be ratified by all participants and would come into effect on Jan. 1, 1996, he said. It would be reviewed three years later.

But France swiftly divorced itself from the pact and made clear it would oppose it inside the European Union, delegates said. EU members were represented at the talks by the Brussels-based European Commission.

France's opposition came in a statement read to a special final session by a French delegate, who went to OECD headquarters after Paris tried unsuccessfully to have the proceedings adjourned.

Details were not made public, but one delegate said: "The French are out behind the agreement."

Paris argues that scrapping subsidies would harm it against competitors, including some EU partners, who operate indirect schemes that

are not available in France, officials said.

Several delegates said the question of jobs at France's two key remaining shipyards, Saint-Lazaire and Le Havre, appeared to be particularly sensitive a year before presidential elections.

France alone could not stop a qualified majority vote in the European Council of Ministers, except by invoking the "Luxembourg compromise," a GATT-related formula seen as a powerful but possibly contentious tool, EU experts said.

The issue could be raised as early as Monday, when the EU's General Affairs Council meets in Brussels.

Meanwhile, delegates highlighted the ambitious scope of the draft shipbuilding accord, described by a U.S. official as "much more comprehensive than any other sectoral agreement."

If ratified, binding international trade pact over negotiated by the OECD, normally a sedate economic think-tank for industrialized nations.

The accord came almost exactly 24 hours after the United States and the European Commission, in a previous all-nighter, buried difference over the Jones Act. The law bans foreign-built or foreign-owned ships from U.S. coastal trade.

Long decried as unfair by Europeans, and regarded as politically sacred in the United States, the act will remain in place, delegates said. But unspecified countermeasures will be available if it is shown to be misused.

A proposal before Congress to fine subsidised ships on entry would also probably be sidelined, they said.

Debate rages on floating exchange rates years after Bretton Woods

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The 50th anniversary of the Bretton Woods accord has renewed debate over floating exchange rates even as the dollar — the market's centerpiece — has tumbled to record lows.

The upcoming anniversary has also focused attention on the two key institutions born of Bretton Woods: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, better known as the World Bank.

Commemorations are set for July 22 to mark the signing of the Bretton Woods agreement in 1944 by representatives of 44 countries in the forests of the northeastern U.S. state of New Hampshire.

The accord is widely credited with helping to bring about a period of general world prosperity through the late 1960s by setting fixed exchange rates between major world currencies. The dollar, which then was convertible to gold at a fixed rate, was the system's anchor.

But inflation, sent spiraling largely by Vietnam War spending, eroded the value of the greenback through the 1960s.

That prompted then-President Richard Nixon in 1971 to break the link between gold and the dollar, and allow the U.S. currency to float, essentially devaluing the dollar and scrapping the underlying principle of the Bretton Woods accord.

Since that time, the major industrial powers have tried with varying success to brake sharp changes in the value of their currencies, which now are set mainly by market forces.

To keep fluctuations under control, they have tried to coordinate macroeconomic policies, keep their currencies within certain ranges and

avoid large trade deficits or surpluses.

Major industrial democracies also have hammered out economic agreements to stabilize currencies, with perhaps the most important the 1985 accord signed at the Plaza Hotel in New York at the urging of then-treasury secretary James Baker.

Other key agreements were signed in Tokyo in 1986 and at the Louvre Museum in Paris in 1987.

But the system still has drawn fire for allowing sharp, and sometimes wide, fluctuations between the major currencies that can cause harmful shocks to national economies. Some critics say that these shifts can block growth, push up unemployment and encourage protectionism.

The dollar's most recent plunge — it dropped to post-World War II lows against

the yen on July 8 — could derail Germany's and Japan's economic recoveries, as it raises the prices of their exports.

That, of course, could be a boon for sales of competing U.S. industries and help the United States.

But the dollar's lingering weakness could have an inflationary effect in the United States by pushing up the prices of imports, and pressing the Federal Reserve (Fed) to tighten its monetary policy, which could slow U.S. economic activity.

A private commission led by former Fed chairman Paul Volcker and composed of international monetary experts issued a report in early July calling for exchange rates to be stabilized by establishing flexible ranges within which currencies would be allowed to "float."

Manila churchman calls illegal recruiters 'wolves'

MANILA (R) — The Philippines' most influential church leader Sunday denounced illegal labour recruiters as "wolves" and urged a nationwide crackdown on their activities.

Cardinal Jaime Sin accused unlicensed recruiting agencies of sending thousands of poor Filipino men and women overseas every year to be exploited by unscrupulous employers in the Middle East, Malaysia, Taiwan, and other countries.

In Japan and in Europe, many women are forced into prostitution while many Filipino seamen live in dehumanising conditions on foreign fishing vessels, he said in a homily.

"Illegal recruiters bring desperate Filipinos desiring to earn much needed money

abroad to a slow and painful death," the Manila Roman Catholic archbishop said.

There are more than two million Filipino overseas workers, mostly women. They include domestics, night club entertainers, factory workers, labourers, seamen and professionals.

Despite a government crackdown, many illegal recruiters continue to operate, duping glib Filipino to sell precious belongings and spend lifetime savings for fake passports and other papers to get them abroad.

Cardinal Sin said the church was surveying illegal recruiters prior to launching nationwide campaign against them.

"Let us denounce and root these wolves," he said.

JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Ordinary Issue No. 13/1994

Drawing of July 17, 1994

Winning Tickets

Holder of ticket No. 39272 Wins JD 40,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 1,000 each wins JD 200 39273 39282 39372 30272 49272 39271 39262 39172 38272 29272
Holder of ticket No. 66378 Wins JD 10,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 1,000 each wins JD 100 66379 66388 66478 67378 76378 66377 66368 66278 65378 56378
Holder of ticket No. 89764 Wins JD 5,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 700 each wins JD 70 89765 89774 89864 80764 99764 89763 89754 89664 88764 79764
Holder of ticket No. 22686 Wins JD 3,500	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 400 each wins JD 40 22687 22696 22786 23686 32686 22685 22676 22586 21686 12686
Holder of ticket No. 32531 Wins JD 2,500	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 250 each wins JD 25 32532 32541 32631 33531 42531 32530 32521 32431 31531 22531
Holder of ticket No. 60463 Wins JD 1,200	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 200 each wins JD 20 60464 60473 60563 61463 70463 60462 60453 60363 69463 50463
Holder of ticket No. 03776 Wins JD 1,500	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 100 each wins JD 10 03777 03786 03876 04776 13776 03775 03766 03676 02776 93776
Holder of ticket No. 22863 Wins JD 1,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 100 each wins JD 10 22864 22873 22963 23863 32863 22862 22853 22763 21863 12863

Ticket numbers 81584 64399 22818 85425 04846	Win JD 200 each
Ticket numbers 28834 47074 34747 71379 40462	Win JD 100 each







TICKETS ENDING WITH

2400 1136 1315 1462 Win JD 4 each	0820 5050 2949 Win JD 20 each
692 242 Win JD 15 each	7539 0130 Win JD 10 each
62 Win JD 4 each	6 (Six) Win JD 3 each

COVER PRIZES FOR THE LOTTERY SELLERS

48 covers, attached to the stub of 10 ending in 880 176 583 485	Win JD 10
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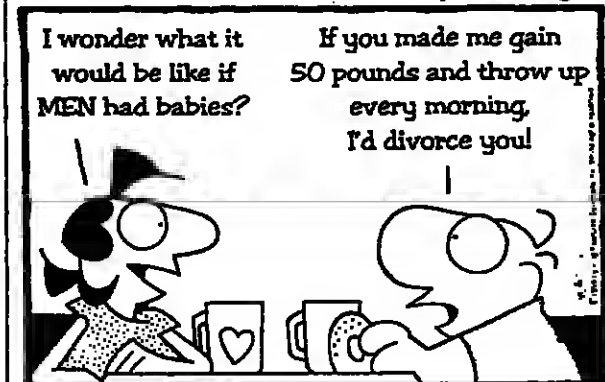
Winners of the grand prizes in the special issue number 12/1994 of July 2, 1994

 Vision Head 1994 Full second JD 10,000	 Royal Arab Amman-Madinet Full fourth JD 3,500	 Isa Tammam Amman-Tala Ghrair Half sixth JD 1,000	 Abdul A. Amman-Tarhoun Half sixth JD 1,000	 Thurayya Fico Amman-Tarhoun Half seventh JD 750	 Al-Salhi Amman-Wakeel Full eighth JD 1,000 100%
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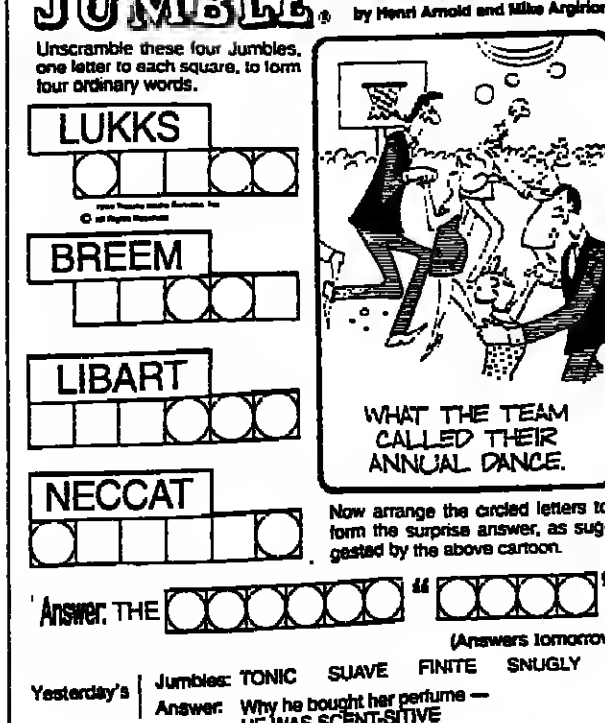
Next Draw takes place on August 2, 1994

First biggest prizes are issued from GUVS headquarters

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



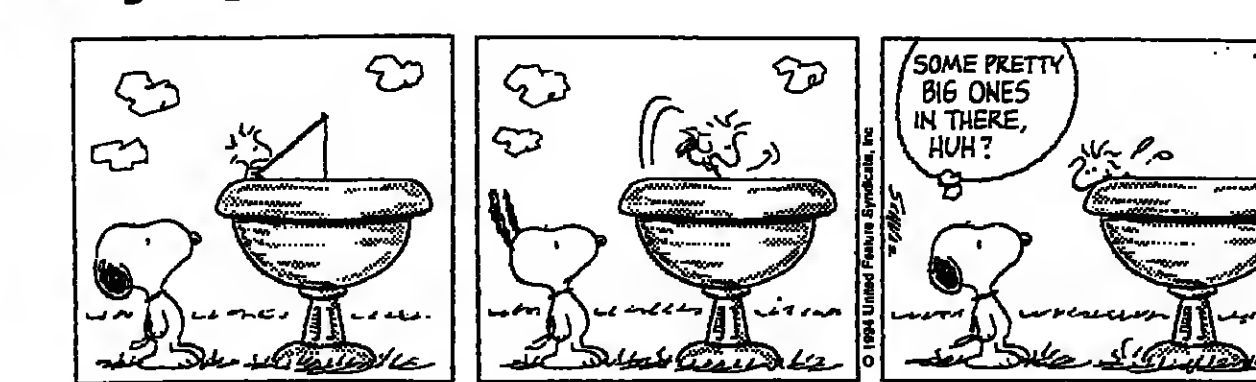
JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY JULY 18, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A good morning to discuss mutual duties with co-workers who lack your understanding of the way you want things to be. Show that you are flexible and willing to keep important promises.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try not to criticise associates early to the day and gain the support you need. Studying community matters is wise now for your success.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) There could be a delay in plans you have formulated, but this gives you the needed time to perfect details. Be patient.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Don't be unpleasant with one who is unable to meet a promise right now. Show others that you can be relied upon when needed.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Do favours for associates and gain their added cooperation. You have to exercise patience in handling a civic matter.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may find it hard to get started on your work today, but persevere and you get much accomplished. Feel alive and alert for duties.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are now able to enjoy recreations that you've had

little time for in the past. You have creative ideas which need expression.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Attend to those duties which must be done early in the day for best results. Show more interest in outside activities you are involved in.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Talks with associates can produce excellent results now. You are able to communicate very well with others today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Study your money situation well and take steps to improve it. Be sure to keep important promises you have made to others.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are thinking very clearly now and can easily advance in your line of endeavour. Stop wasting precious time with non-productive matters.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Engage in profitable activities early in the day so you will have time for recreation later. Be more optimistic about the future.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Contact a close friend who has good ideas to give you. Follow your intuition when dealing with others and get excellent results.

THE Daily Crossword by Virginia B. Hopewell



Financial Markets
Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (July 11-July 15, 1994)

AMMAN — The dollar continued its decline against other major currencies last week. It ended the week 0.48 per cent lower against the mark, 0.79 per cent lower against sterling and 0.25 per cent lower against the yen.

The U.S. unit depreciated sharply against other major currencies Monday. It declined to 1,5180 marks during trading hours, its lowest level against the German currency since October 1992, and set a post WWII intra-day low record against the Japanese yen, on disappointment over the conclusion of the G-7 meetings without a declaration of a plan to support the dollar. However, the dollar rose above its lows later that day.

Meanwhile, market participants attributed the dollar's decline to a speech by the U.S. President, at the end of the previous week, in which he said that the dollar/mark exchange rate is not low compared to historical standards. The remark was perceived by market participants as an indication that the Clinton Administration would not intervene to support the dollar.

The dollar continued its retreat Tuesday. It fell to 1.5155 marks and 96.60 yen during trading hours, a new post WWII record low against the Japanese currency, after the release of U.S. Producer Prices showing inflation under control. The General PPI Index showed no change in June, compared to the previous month, while the Core Index revealed a decline of 0.1 per cent. However, the PPI's negative effect on the dollar, which dampened expectations of a near term Fed tightening, was reversed later due to its positive effect on U.S. bond prices.

The U.S. unit rose sharply against other major currencies Wednesday, however, on rumours the Fed was about to raise short term interest rates by 0.50 per cent to 1.0 per cent. This happened despite the release of U.S. Consumer Prices showing a slight rise of 0.3 per cent in June, compared to the previous month, which translated into an annual rate of advance of 2.5 per cent.

The dollar continued its appreciation against other major currencies Thursday, especially against the mark. It rose after the U.S. Treasury Secretary expressed the Clinton's Administration's intentions to cooperate with the Fed in the future to achieve a stronger dollar. The dollar also appreciated on increased demand for U.S. Treasury securities by foreign investors.

Meanwhile, some market participants indicated that the dollar gained ground on rumours that a highly ranked official in the Clinton Administration asked exchange rates desks on what they consider an appropriate level for the dollar.

The U.S. unit witnessed a relapse Friday, however, on decreased expectations of Fed monetary tightening, and decreased expectations of renewed central bank intervention to support the dollar. This happened after a speech by the Fed Chairman before the U.S. Congress on government spending, in which he said that inflation is slowing in the U.S., and that central bank intervention has only a short-run effect.

The Chairman also said, that reliance on foreign savings to finance the U.S. Budget Deficit is not acceptable in the long-run, and may not be possible.

On the other hand, the dollar was affected negatively against the yen by the approaching release of U.S. May trade data, which is to be released Tuesday 19/7/1994. The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.5536 marks and 97.82 yen, while sterling ended it at \$1.5618.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	8/7/1994	15/7/1994	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.5495	1.5618	0.79 %
Deutsche Mark	1.5610	1.5536	0.48 %
Swiss Franc	1.3160	1.3081	0.60 %
French Franc	5.3650	5.3265	0.72 %
Japanese Yen	98.06	97.82	0.25 %

USD Per STD

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	3-Month	6-Month	9-Month	1-Year
U.S. Dollar	4.57	5.62	4.51	5.62
Sterling Pound	4.51	5.67	4.81	5.93
Deutsche Mark	4.75	4.93	4.62	4.61
Swiss Franc	4.00	4.43	3.87	4.31
French Franc	5.31	5.67	5.43	5.67
Japanese Yen	1.87	2.12	1.87	2.12

Interbank bid rates for major currencies (USD = 100% of equivalent)

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6690	0.6910
Sterling Pound	1.0737	1.0791
Deutsche Mark	0.4430	0.4452
Swiss Franc	0.5263	0.5289
French Franc	0.1293	0.1299
Japanese Yen	0.7034	0.7069
Dutch Guilder	0.3951	0.3971
Swedish Krona	***	***
Italian Lira	0.0444	0.0446
Belgian Franc	***	***

Per 100

Ambitious Arab stocks project nears completion

ABU DHABI (AFP) — An ambitious project to link Arab stock markets as part of overall development plans is nearing completion but experts stressed Sunday regional markets first needed to open up to foreign investors.

The stocks data base, a computerised network established by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), was launched five years ago and it could be completed later this year, the fund said in a report Sunday.

"The fund is pressing ahead with the final arrangements for launching the stock data system as part of plans to develop Arab stock markets," it said.

The base will provide regional exchanges with information on stock markets and economic conditions in member states, trading institutions, prices of shares and monthly reports on turnover in each market.

The AMF, the watchdog of Arab economies, said this would help tackle the persistent problem of lack of information on Arab stock markets and consequently enable investors in one country to trade in other member states.

All formal floors in the 22-member Arab League would gradually be linked to the data base while other Arab countries could join later when they established exchanges, according to the report.

It said the AMF, with a capital of \$1.3 billion, had already signed agreements in this regard with the official stock markets in Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco. Other floors would join in later.

"The base will be one of the main elements in the AMF's programmes to upgrade Arab stock markets and encourage those without exchanges to establish floors," the report said.

Only 10 of the Arab countries have formal exchanges and activity in such markets has remained relatively small due to political uncertainty in some members and lack of incentives and information about trading institutions.

About 1,100 banks and companies trade their shares in the Arab region, with a capitalisation of nearly \$50 billion, a fraction of the total world share capitalisation of more than \$9 trillion in 1992.

Arab officials have repeatedly called for development of regional stock markets as part of reforms to heal their ailing economies and attract part of their overseas funds.

estimated at \$800 billion. They far exceed the combined 1992 Arab gross domestic product of around \$450 billion.

Addressing an economic conference here last year, former AMF chairman Osama Faqih criticised regulations governing Arab stock and called for comprehensive structural reforms to develop them.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) account for nearly half the total market capitalisation in the Arab World but they have no formal floors and their share dealing is still confined to local investors.

Kuwait has also shut the doors for foreign investment in shares and activity, once the highest in the region, has sharply declined as the market struggles to recover from the 1990 invasion.

"Linking Arab stock markets in a single network will boost dealing in some countries as it will give investors access to other markets," said Zuhair Kaswani, a leading UAE stockbroker.

"But this will have little impact in the markets which are closed to foreigners. Dealing could largely grow if they end national monopoly of share trading."

UAE bans clothes projects to limit Asian workforce

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has decided to ban the establishment of new clothes factories, as part of a drive to limit the number of Asian workers.

"The cabinet has decided to stop licences for new garment factories. The decision could be revised in the future," the minister of state

for financial and industrial affairs, Ahmad Al Tayer, told the official news agency WAM.

Official figures show 161 ready-made clothes factories operate in the UAE, mainly in Dubai and its Jebel Ali free trade zone.

Their investments are estimated at 669 million dirhams (\$182 million) and workers at 30,000. Most of them are from India, Pakistan and other Asian countries, which are the main source of labour for the UAE.

Many of the factories have been under financial pressure after they were forced four years ago to slash production to comply with an export quota agreement with the United States, the top market for UAE garments.

The UAE is seeking to cut its large foreign workforce, which accounts for nearly 90 per cent of the 700,000-strong labour force. The drive includes raising for nationals and restrictions on visas for expatriate manpower.

China moves to promote credit cards

BEIJING (AFP) — China plans to issue 200 million credit cards by the turn of the century in a bid to restrict the amount of cash in circulation and strengthen control of the money supply, a central bank official was quoted as saying Sunday.

"Development of China's credit card business is a crucial step in modernising the nation's financial industry and creating a better environment for economic development," said Li Ye, director of the payment system and financial science and technology department at the People's Bank of China.

The popularisation of credit card use has been given priority by the central government which is seeking to wean Chinese off their traditional reliance on cash transactions.

Widespread use of credit cards would mean a drop in money supply as consumers deposit cash in accounts to cover future use, Mr. Li was quoted as saying by the China Daily Business Weekly.

"The market is huge, the demand is great, the prospects are rosy," said an upbeat Li.

By the end of 1993, more than four million credit cards had been issued in China, with total transaction volume topping 200 billion yuan (\$23 billion).

Besides credit cards, Mr. Li said the central bank was promoting the use of automated teller machines (ATM) cards for deposits and withdrawals.

"By the end of 1995, a total of 20 million cards will be issued, including 10 million credit cards," he said.

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Romario to do specialist job on Italy

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Pelé believes Romario, Jorginho, Dunga and Marcio Santos can lead Brazil to their fourth World Cup on Sunday.

"They are key players and, hopefully, can lead Brazil to the World Cup," the 1970s idol said here Friday.

Romario is a specialist player. Whenever he gets the ball he's a very dangerous player. He can make space for the other forwards or score himself," said the man who inspired Brazil to their third World Cup in 1970.

"Although he agreed Bebe to was important, Pelé thought right-back Jorginho and central defender Marcio Santos could play a more important role in Sunday's final."

"Marcio Santos was the third-choice when this tournament started but now he is the best central defender in the world," he said.

"Dunga is the heart of Brazil. He is the man every national team should have and Jorginho makes the team think. He starts a lot of good moves down the right flank."

Brazil can be thankful their injuries came in their strongest department on the field — central defence.

"Brazil had about eight central defenders before the event, and all would not have looked out of place in a world championship winning team."

To lose both centre backs, Ricardo Rocha and Ricardo Gomes, would almost certainly have been a major blow to any other team.

But replacements Aldair and Marcio Santos have ensured none of Brazil's three goals conceded in six matches have come through central defence.

Paris Saint Germain's Ricardo Gomes was ruled out of the World Cup with a torn

hamstring following their friendly match against El Salvador in Fresno, California on June 12.

Ricardo Rocha hurt his groin during the first match against Russia June 20 and was substituted by Aldair 22 minutes before the end. Since then Marcio Santos, who plays for French club Bordeaux, and AS Roma's Aldair have performed superbly.

Thankfully, coach Carlos Alberto Parreira had no other serious injuries. An injury in his workmanlike midfield — at least workmanlike by Brazilian standards — could have been disastrous as they do not have the strength in depth to cover.

Brazil started well with five goals against Russia and Cameroon although a 1-1 draw with Sweden and Russia's subsequent six-goal thrashing of Cameroon put Brazil's performances into perspective.

They had Leonardo, their enterprising left-back, sent off and banned for the rest of the tournament for smashing his elbow into Tah Ramos face in the 1-0 second-round win over the United States.

And the two goals they conceded the Netherlands in the quarterfinals again raised doubts.

But Branco, whose 30-metre free-kick clinched that 3-2 win over the Dutch, has proved a more than satisfactory replacement for Leonardo.

And the Romario-Bebeto partnership has looked better and better.

Zinho probes intelligently behind the front-runners but with Rai a pale shadow of the man who led Sao Paulo to the 1992 Intercontinental Cup, the attacking thrust provided by Dunga and Mazinho is steady but predictable.

Team spirit may have been helped as eight of the 11 probable starters against Italy play for European clubs.

Getting away from the pressure of being a footballer in Brazil may prove to have been crucial preparation, according to team press liaison officer John Polis.

"Team spirit is good because they did not have to suffer the weight of expectation heaped on them by the Brazilian press before the event," said Polis.

Europeanisation of the team has been a major criticism of Parreira. But he disagrees they have adopted a style in character with the old continent.

He said in Europe they play long balls, whereas Brazil play short passes. He added Europeans tend to mark man-for-man whereas Brazil use a zonal system.

"The only European trait we use is defensive discipline when we do not have the ball. South American sides in general are weaker than in Europe when they don't have possession," Parreira said.

The only selection doubt for Sunday's final is whether Mazinho keeps his place ahead of skipper Rai, who was kept out of the starting lineup by Mazinho from the start of the knockout stages.

Mazinho, more of a workhorse than the creative Rai, was taken off after the first half of their semifinal against Sweden. Rai replaced him and will hope he did enough for a recall.

"It's the coach who picks the side but I hope I play some of the match. We are determined to get revenge for losing in the 1982 finals," he said.

Rai's elder brother Socrates was in the side that lost 3-2 to Italy in Spain when they only needed a draw to reach the semifinals.



Romario

Donadoni injury gives Sacchi another headache

PASADENA (R) — World Cup finalists Italy, sweating over the fitness of star striker Roberto Baggio, were dealt another blow when they learned experienced midfielder Roberto Donadoni had an injury problem.

"Roberto (Donadoni) felt a pain in his left hamstring a few hours after the match (on Wednesday) and it got worse during the flight yesterday," said team doctor Andrea Ferretti Friday.

"It should be the kind of injury that clears up within 24 hours but we are obviously keeping a very close eye on him."

Ferretti said there was little change in the condition of Baggio, who also has a hamstring problem, and is rated only 50-50 to play in Sunday's final. Both Donadoni and Baggio were ordered to sit out training Friday.

Baggio has steered triple champions Italy to the finals with five goals in the past three games and is determined to play.

"I just haven't allowed myself to think about missing the game," an Italian team spokesman quoted Baggio, who did not appear at a breakfast time press conference, as saying.

"I don't feel any pain when I walk but there is a sharp sensation when I make quick movements."

Coach Arrigo Sacchi refused to discuss who could replace Baggio.

Parma attacker Gianfranco Zola is available again after suspension while Giuseppe Signori, leading scorer in Italian soccer for the past two seasons, could be promoted after starting the last two games on the bench.

Sacchi also has problems in defence where both Mauro Tassotti and Alessandro Costacurta are suspended.

Roberto Mucci has taken over the right back spot from Tassotti in this World Cup but the loss of Costacurta, one of the Italian stars of the tournament, is a serious one.

Sacchi has virtually ruled out recalling veteran captain Franco Baresi who has just resumed training after keyhole surgery to repair



Roberto Baggio

damaged knee cartilage. "As things stand today I would say that Baresi's chances are very remote," Sacchi said. Parma's Luigi Apolloni, who has won just three caps, is the likely deputy for Costacurta.

Italy have triumphed over adversity throughout the tournament, scoring vital wins over Norway and Nigeria when down to 10 men and Sacchi hopes this spirit can compensate for any absences.

"I am very happy to coach a group of excellent professionals who have shown such character," he said. "Baggio is a very great player and if he were unavailable then we would lose something. It would be up to the rest of the team to produce a little bit extra to make good the loss."

"With this squad anything is possible and we have our sights fixed on the Cup."

Sacchi was associated with thrilling attacking soccer when he coached Milan to the European Cup in 1989 and 1990 but his Italian team have failed to scale such heights with their play.

"I thought we played very good soccer in the first half of the semifinal with Bulgaria," Sacchi said when questioned on his team's performances.

"It would have been very difficult for my Milan team to play as it did in these conditions, in this heat... it's very hard to put pressure on opponents and have good movement off the ball here."

Sacchi did not agree that most neutrals in Pasadena's Rose Bowl stadium Sunday would be rooting for Brazil, a team which has not matched the skills of its illustrious predecessors but has been better to watch than Italy.

"I think that the fans will support the team which produces the best soccer on the day," he said.

Stockholm wins reception, Goteborg fumes

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP) — Sweden's battle for the World Cup trophy may be over, but plans for the team's return home have heated up a rivalry between cities claiming to be the country's soccer capital.

The Swedish national team, which reached the semifinals in its best showing in years, is scheduled to return Monday to a reception in Stockholm. But more than 10,000 soccer fans have signed a petition calling for the celebration to be moved to the western coastal city of

Goteborg, about 480 kilometres from Stockholm.

Eight of the 22 players on the national squad live in Goteborg. Many play for the city's most famous soccer club IFK Goteborg, while five others have previously played for Goteborg teams.

"Goteborg can truly be called Sweden's soccer capital," said a letter Thursday signed by Goteborg's top city and soccer officials.

The Goteborgs-Posten newspaper Friday was more blunt: "Why are they returning to Stockholm? The arguments are as thin as prison soap."

As Sweden's second largest city, Goteborg lives in the shadow of the capital, often complaining that Stockholm steals the limelight and ignores all events — from sports to politics — elsewhere.

Among players associated with Goteborg is veteran goal keeper Thomas Ravelli, who has made a record 116 appearances for the national side.

Local politicians and Gunnar Larsson, chairman of IFK Goteborg, supported the appeal. "Where would it be more appropriate?" Larsson told the Goteborgs-Posten.

The complaints are falling on deaf ears. The national soccer federation said Thursday it will not change its plans, and national media commented Friday that thousands of fans will be disappointed.

"The national team has made sporting history. This is a feat of national interest and therefore it is appropriate that the celebrations are conducted in the Swedish capital," Michael Salzer of the federation said.

Resigning its loss of the World Cup reception, Goteborg is setting its sights on IFK Goteborg's matches this fall in the European championship league.

Sweden which was to play Bulgaria in the third-place game Saturday, whatever the result, it will be Sweden's best World Cup placing since finishing runner-up 1958 after Brazil.

The national team arrives Monday afternoon to Stockholm's Arlanda international airport. The team will then drive in convertibles through downtown Stockholm to a park where thousands of fans are expected to cheer them.

Hungarian to referee final

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Sándor Puhl of Hungary, who missed Mauro Tassotti breaking Luis Enrique's nose with his elbow, will referee the World Cup final between Brazil and Italy.

Puhl, 39 on Thursday, booked two Spaniards in the Spain-Italy quarterfinal but missed the incident in which blood streamed down Enrique's face after his nose was broken.

Tassotti was later suspended for eight matches by FIFA after they had examined video evidence to sanction an off-the-ball incident for the first time.

"We could not hold against Mr. Puhl an incident that happened behind his back," FIFA Assistant Secretary Michel Zen-Ruffinen said Friday.

Puhl also refereed the Brazil-Sweden first-round game when he showed Brazilian defender Aldair a yellow card, and Norway-Mexico when he booked a Mexican.

Puhl is the first European to referee the World Cup final since 1978. A Brazilian handled the 1982 and 1986 matches and a Mexican was in charge in 1990 when a player was sent off for the first time.

Row flares over Russian flop

MOSCOW (R) — The row over Russia's poor performance in the World Cup flared again Saturday when assistant team coach Yuri Semin accused many players of letting the side down.

Semin — speaking to Sport Express newspaper — was particularly critical of Benfica forward Sergei Yuran, who he said had given up after being dropped following a poor performance in the first game.

The fiery Yuran was kicked out of the squad after the first round games following a reportedly heated row with coach Pavel Sadryin.

Russia, deprived before the tournament began of several stars by a player mutiny against Sadryin, lost 2-0 to Brazil and 3-1 to Sweden before regaining some pride in a 6-1 victory over Cameroon.

Semin said the players had split into different camps from the start, wrecking any attempts to instill a team spirit.

"Our team could not unite. Personal ambitions prevailed. The players objected to each other, the trainers, to the whole world. And as a result they looked as though they objected to soccer," said Semin.

The Russian substitutes were so envious of those on the pitch against Sweden that only one of the 11 players on the bench cheered when Russia took an early 1-0 lead, Semin said.

The same thing happened when Oleg Salenko scored a World Cup record five goals against Cameroon.

Semin acknowledged it had been a mistake to rely so much on Yuran — who only scored a handful of goals for Benfica last season — in the first game against Brazil.

"If a person cannot create a single worthwhile chance over 90 minutes he is not worth a penny. Even if the opponents are Brazil," Semin said.

Yuran, still in the process of arranging a transfer to English premier division side Arsenal, virtually stopped training after he realised he would be dropped.

"You could say he gave up," said Semin.

The Russian team also fined defender Sergei Gorukovich and striker Dmitry Radchenko \$5,000 each for breaking team rules, but gave no further details.

Semin said he had no idea whether Sadryin would resign. The manager announced before the World Cup he would step down if the team performed poorly.

The daily Izvestia newspaper, tongue firmly in cheek, said the team was lucky dictator Josef Stalin was not still in power.

Izvestia predicted Sadryin would have disappeared immediately — Russian shorthand for a summary execution — while Yuran, Radchenko and Gorukovich would be banned for life.

Champions Spartak Moscow, who provided most of the national team players, would be kicked out of the premier division.

"Russian Soccer Federation chairman Vyacheslav Kolosov would be sacked, kicked out of the Communist Party, struck from the list of those allowed to eat in Kremlin cafeteria and forbidden to live in Moscow," the paper said.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Thai schools to close after Cup final

BANGKOK (R) — Thailand's education authorities have told schools they can close Monday to let teachers and students catch up on their sleep after watching the World Cup soccer final. The Nation newspaper said Saturday many schools had opted to close for the day or at least cancel the first classes to let fans rest after watching live coverage of the Italy versus Brazil game, which starts at 2.35 a.m. local time.

Decree altered to award footballers

SOFIA (R) — Bulgaria's parliament amended a decree Friday to allow the national soccer team to be awarded the highest state honour for their World Cup performance. The "Stara Planina" order — named after a mountain range running through Bulgaria — was hitherto available only to foreign heads of state and other prominent figures for service to Bulgaria. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi and late East German leader Erich Honecker were among those who received it during communist rule. Bulgaria, which had never won a match in the finals until this year, beat Greece, Mexico, Argentina and Germany before losing to Italy 2-1 in the semifinal Sunday.

Taekwondo, triathlon eyed as medal sports

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colorado (AFP) — Taekwondo and triathlon probably will be included as new medal sports at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch said. Samaranch, speaking at the U.S. Olympic Training Centre here, also said boxing "is safe" as an Olympic sport despite judging and safety controversies. Samaranch also said U.S. hopeful Salt Lake City has a strong chance to receive the 2002 Winter Olympics, citing the small margin the city lost by to Nagano, Japan, for the 1998 games. Ten bidders for the 2002 Winter Games will be reduced to four in January, with a final decision to be made next June.

Car driver suffers heart attack

BOLIVAR, Mo. (AP) — Race car driver Rob Biellier of Willard, Mo., suffered a heart attack and died Friday night while competing at Speedway U.S.A. authorities said. Biellier was racing in the late model stock division when his car slowed and brushed lightly against the retaining wall, track spokeswoman Debbie Handley said Saturday. A small fire broke out, but an accident crew put it out before it reached the cockpit, Handley said. Biellier, 45, was taken to Citizens Memorial Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. The hospital listed cardiac arrest as cause of death.

Devers to skip Goodwill Games

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Reigning Olympic and world 100 metres champion Gail Devers has withdrawn from the Goodwill Games, coach Bob Kersee said. Devers injured her left leg during the indoor season and aggravated the leg pain during the U.S. indoor championships last March in Atlanta. The injury has forced Devers off her normal training schedule, preventing her from competing in the multi-sport event which starts next Saturday in St. Petersburg, Russia. Devers won the 100m and 100m hurdles at last year's world championships and was the 100m gold medalist at the Barcelona Olympics.

Cut eye costs Johnson title

BANGKOK (R) — Thailand's Daorung Chuvattana won the World Boxing Association (WBA) bantamweight championship Saturday when titleholder American John Michael Johnson was forced to retire with a cut above the eye after the first round.

Women's Commonwealth basketball scrapped

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Organisers called off the women's Commonwealth basketball championships in Kedah state because of the number of withdrawals. But chief organiser Chuah Boon Kheng said the men's contest would go ahead from Tuesday, with England favourites among the six competing countries. Canada, Singapore, Nigeria, Hong Kong and Malaysia have also confirmed their participation in the biennial championships to be played at the Sin Min Independent Secondary School in Kedah. New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, West Samoa and Tanzania have withdrawn from the event. England won the last championship in Scotland in 1992.

Swedish defender joins German league

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Swedish World Cup defender Roger Ljung has signed for German club Duisburg in £500,000 move from Turkish club Galatasaray. Ljung was said to be unhappy in Turkey and had differences with his club's German coach, Karlheinz Feldkamp. The player was unable to appear in Sweden's final World Cup game, Saturday's third place play-off against Bulgaria, because he had two yellow cards.

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Opening lead: Nine of ♠

When you encounter a bad break, don't immediately throw in the towel. Sometimes there's a way to survive. Witness this hand, reported by England's David Bird.
East's three-spade preempt caused both North and South to stretch a little. The result was a slam which, if you never bid a worse one, would make you a wealthy man, but looking at the combined assets you would not mind resting in a safe

game.
West led the top of the doubleton in partner's suit, won by dummy's ace. With a sure club loser and a two-way diamond finesse, it might seem declarer would need a 3-2 trump split, but that possibility was soon brushed aside when, at the second trick, declarer led a low trump from the table and East discarded a spade.
With three winners in the black suits, declarer saw the slam could squeak home with four diamond tricks and five trumps. However, declarer could afford to ruff only one spade, since West could not hold more than a doubleton.
Declarer won the second trick with the trump ace and continued with a trump. West was forced to play an honor and the queen won. South returned to hand with the king of clubs and successfully ran the jack of diamonds. A diamond in the ten also won and, after unblocking the ace, declarer ruffed a spade to hand and cashed the king of diamonds.
The stage was set. A club to the ace and a club back forced West to ruff partner's trick and West's forced return from the jack of trumps was into declarer's K 9 tenace. Just a matter of time.

Injured Christie to miss showdown with Burrell



LONDON (AFP) — Britain's Olympic sprint champion Linford Christie has withdrawn from his 100m clash with new world record holder Leroy Burrell at the Goodwill Games in St. Petersburg July 25.

Christie, who was also scheduled to race the veteran Carl Lewis, suffered a slight hamstring tear at Crystal Palace last Friday and saw his physiotherapist Saturday.

On Tuesday, he will visit his specialist in Munich to find out whether the injury threatens his bid for a third successive European title in Helsinki in three weeks.

Agent Sue Barrett said today Christie still did not know the full extent of the injury, but was hopeful of being ready for Helsinki.

Christie has also pulled out of grand prix meetings in Nice Monday and Oslo Friday — as well as Wednesday's GB-USA international at Gateshead.

His confrontation with Burrell was billed as one of the major races of the season — with the Americans having no major championship to contest this summer.

Christie was looking forward to proving a point after being accused of avoiding Burrell.

But he has always insisted that titles mean more than times and that his main targets for the summer were defenses of his European and Commonwealth crowns.

"A world record can be taken away from you," he says. "But a championship gold medal is yours for ever."

Track colleague Colin Jackson, who pulled out of Friday's sprint hurdles with a groin strain, is unlikely to run in Nice, but expects to be back in action for the Goodwill Games.

Sweden beat France, move into Davis Cup semifinals

Agencies

SWEDEN knocked France out of the Davis Cup Sunday just hours after French tennis lost one of its Davis Cup masters.

Stefan Edberg put Sweden in the Davis Cup semifinals as he beat Cedric Pioline of France in the first of Sunday reverse singles, 6-4, 6-3, 6-1, played in Cannes, France.

In the meaningless second singles, France's Olivier Delaite beat Henrik Holm, 6-4, 6-3 in a match reduced to best of three sets. Delaite was called to substitute for Arnaud Boetsch, who had to withdraw due to shoulder and hip problems.

Sweden now awaits the winner of the U.S. - Netherlands quarterfinal. It was the seventh time that Sweden has won against France in 10 Davis Cup meetings.

Ironically, France lost this year's Davis Cup quarterfinal to Sweden hours after Jean Borotra, one of the famed "tour musketiers" of French tennis, died.

A minute of silence was held before the start of the day's play.

Borotra led France to six consecutive Davis Cup titles between 1927 and 1932. He was president at 93 in the lockerroom when France won the next time in 1991.

Since then France has gone out in the quarterfinals.

With temperatures above 0 degrees centigrade (104 F) on the court for the third day, Edberg easily beat Pioline.

Edberg had lost in the first round at the French Open and the second round at Wimbledon after winning six Grand Slam titles.

"For me it was important to go out there and play well after what has happened the last couple months," Edberg said, who didn't lose a set in two matches here.

"I played two good matches in a row and it was nice to go out there and do what I usually can do," Edberg said. Edberg waited until the

seventh game of the first set to gain the pivotal break. Then went on to take the first set in 50 minutes.

There were few long rallies in the match, each gaining service winners or making quick errors in the heat.

The Swede continued to roll. He won the second set in 35 minutes, jumping to a 3-1 lead and breaking Pioline's service for a second time in the ninth game.

Edberg went ahead 5-0 in the third set that had the home French crowd hooting and whistling at Pioline's play before the Frenchman won a game.

Edberg served and concluded the match in 2 hours, 2 minutes.

In Saturday's doubles, Jan Apel and Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden easily beat France's Delaite and Jean-Philippe Fleurian, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4.

In Friday's singles, France and Sweden tied 1-1. Edberg won the opener over Boetsch 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (7-4), beating the Frenchman for the seventh straight time without losing a set.

Pioline, making his Davis Cup debut after ending a feud with French tennis officials, pulled France even by beating Holm, 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 in a match nearly three hours.

Guy Forget, who reached the Wimbledon quarterfinals, isn't playing for France because of concerns about his knee. He recently returned to the tour from a year off after knee surgery.

Germany into semifinals

In Halle, Germany, German Michael Stich took the defending champions through to the Davis Cup semifinals after a bitterly fought victory over Spain's Sergi Bruguera Sunday.

Stich gave Germany an unbeatable 3-1 lead by winning 7-6, 5-7, 7-5, 6-2 in the first reverse singles and ensured that his team would play either Russia or the Czech Republic in the last four in September.

Stich, a former Wimbledon champion and the world number four, won the first set tiebreak 7-4.

The second set gave the 12,400 spectators a display of excellent grasscourt tennis. Stich saved four set points before allowing Bruguera, the French Open champion, to level the match.

In Rotterdam, Dutchman Richard Krajicek fought his way past American world number one Pete Sampras to level the score in their Davis Cup quarterfinal.

With the score at 2-2, the outcome of the World group tie hinged on Sunday's second reverse singles between Jim Courier, for the United States, and Jacco Eltingh.

Krajicek beat Sampras 2-6, 7-5, 7-6, 7-5 in three hours eight minutes.

Sampras, who beat Eltingh in straight sets Friday, started out well Sunday, breaking Krajicek in the opening game.

In the second set, Krajicek came close to losing his service in the opening game again but saved a breakpoint and broke the American in the following game.

Sampras's serve began to falter and he was broken again in the 12th game to lose the set. After an exchange of breaks in the third, the set went to a tiebreak which Krajicek won 7-5.

The fourth set was interrupted by a light aircraft circling over the stadium trailing a banner wishing Eltingh, who was in the winning doubles pair Saturday, good luck for his match against Courier.

The third set saw Bruguera miss out on two breakpoint points which would have given him a 2-0 lead.

Widely-regarded as a clay-court specialist, Bruguera showed outstanding qualities on the grass at Halle, adapting with ease to the serve-and-volley tactics that the fast surface requires.

But in the fourth set, Stich finally took control after more than two hours.

Iran allows women to watch live football

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian sports authorities decided to waive a law barring women from watching live sports events and allow them to attend the Asian Football Youth Games opening here Monday, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said Sunday.

Football federation chief Amir Abedini told IRNA that families would be allowed in stadiums during the games to accompany their teenage children who were too young to attend on their own.

However, the ban would only be lifted for matches between under-16 footballers from Iran, Indonesia, India and Bahrain, in group four of the Asian Games, he said.

Women were banned from public sports events after the 1979 Islamic revolution as part of moves to segregate the sexes according to Islamic principles.

The latest decision appeared to be a compromise between the federation, which wants the ban lifted, and Islamic hardliners opposed to any easing of the restriction.

The federation announced July 9 that women would be allowed into stadium to watch football matches live, prompting sharp criticism from the radicals.

"What is the purpose of having women at our stadiums and to what degree could their presence help our young footballers achieve success?" asked the daily Kayhan.

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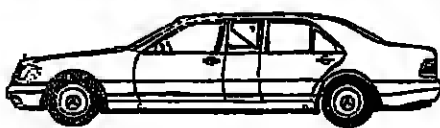
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Islam urged to shun extremism

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Religious Affairs Minister Mohammad Ali Mahgoub opened the first conference for Egyptian clerics on Sunday calling on Islam to distance itself from extremism. He told the conference Islam should be "far from the extremism of extremists and the assaults of assailants." Speaking to about 1,500 clerics from around Egypt, Mr. Mahgoub urged clerics to be "progressive" and "live the reality of the people and their lives' demands." The grand sheikh of Al Azhar, Gad Al Haq Ali Gad Al Haq, also urged the clerics to clarify to people "the image which Islam defines as to how their behaviour and acts should be." The four-day conference is aimed at countering what official Muslim ranks see as the deviation and extremism of militant groups. Mr. Mahgoub said earlier this week that Muslim scholars were preparing studies in response to 29 books and research papers written by Muslim extremists against the state. The religious affairs ministry controls about 80 per cent of the 170,000 mosques in Egypt, Mr. Mahgoub said, adding he hoped it would be able to control the rest within one year. Small mosques, particularly in troubled areas in southern Egypt, are often used by militants as recruitment centres.

U.N. to evacuate 1,500 Somalis from Yemen

SANAA (AFP) — The United Nations is to evacuate some 1,500 Somali refugees from the southern Yemeni city of Aden back to Somalia next week, U.N. spokesman Neji Friji said here Sunday. "An initial contingent of 763 refugees will be evacuated, Monday and a similar number of Somalis (...) are to leave Aden next Sunday," Mr. Friji said. A ship chartered by the United Nations will take the Somalis from a camp at Al Hanin, in the Abyan governorate in southern Yemen, to Berbera in northwestern Somalia. Out of 60,000 Somalis who sought shelter in Yemen from war and famine in their own country more than three years ago, 5,000 are currently registered in Yemen according to international aid workers. The refugees were forced to flee their original camp in Al Kud, on the Gulf of Aden coast, during Yemen's two-month civil war which ended on July 7 when troops loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh seized Aden. Mr. Friji said evacuations would continue if other Somalis requested to leave the country.

Report: Iraq selling Kuwaiti 'treasures'

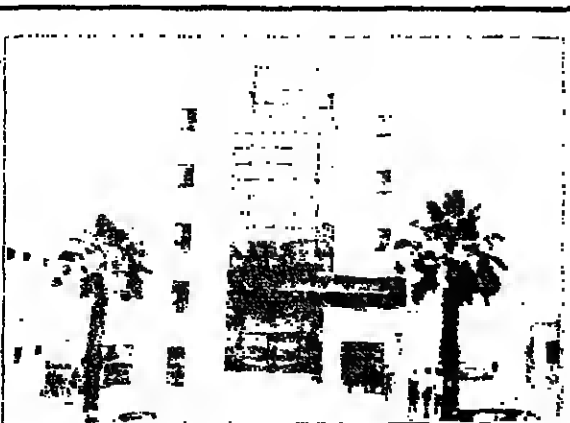
LONDON (AP) — Iraq is trying to sell some of Kuwait's most precious royal treasures on the international black market, a British newspaper reported Sunday. The Sunday Times said Scotland Yard's international and organised crime branch had uncovered a ring dealing in Kuwaiti antiquities in Switzerland, London and New York, and arrested "two wealthy Middle Eastern dealers" in London. It said a third man was arrested in Switzerland. The report identified three Kuwaiti-owned items seized this year by British investigators in London. A 13th-century bronze lamp valued at \$600,000, two candlesticks from the 14th and 15th centuries worth \$90,000, and an Iranian carpet worth \$32,500. The report could not be independently verified Sunday. Scotland Yard spokesman told the Associated Press they would not comment.

U.N. official caught in Somali crossfire

MOGADISHU (R) — The U.N. secretary-general's special representative in Somalia, Ghanaian Ambassador Victor Gbeho, escaped unhurt when his convoy was caught in a crossfire between warring Somali factions, a U.N. spokesman said on Sunday. The incident happened near Mogadishu airport on Friday when Mr. Gbeho was returning from an official U.N. reception at the U.N.'s southern compound. Military spokesman Major Rich McDonald said Mr. Gbeho's convoy came under "indirect fire" during a fight between members of the Somali National Alliance (SNA) of warlord Mohammed Farah Aided and an armed group belonging to the Muroside clan. The lead vehicle in the convoy was hit, but there were no casualties.

Kuwaitis to receive compensation payments

KUWAIT (AP) — The first Kuwaitis to be compensated for losses caused by the Iraqi occupation will receive their cheques next month, on the fourth anniversary of the invasion, a senior official said Sunday. Some 303 individuals who were seriously hurt or lost members of their family during the seven-month occupation will be handed a total of \$1.4 million. Adel Assem, director of the government body responsible for assessing damages, told the Associated Press. The emirate estimates its losses from the Iraqi occupation at more than \$170 billion, not including damage to the environment and possible damage to the natural oil reservoirs. The Security Council decided at the end of the Gulf war that Iraq should pay war reparations to Kuwait and all individuals who suffered because of its invasion of the emirate. The U.N. Compensation Commission decided to unfreeze Iraq's oil-based funds to pay for the reparations it approved for Kuwaitis and nationals of about 16 other countries.



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Saddam offers 'peace and security' to neighbours

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein offered "peace and security" to neighbouring Arab states Sunday on the eve of a U.N. review of sanctions imposed after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

President Saddam called on Arab countries which had opposed the invasion to "return to reason and no longer insist on harming" his country, in a speech quoted by the official Iraqi News Agency INA.

He told Iraq's Arab neighbours: "We confirm our offer of peace and security to those who need it, including leaders who have harmed us, if this can be useful to our (Arab) Nation."

His speech, monitored in Cyprus, was to mark the 25th anniversary of the ruling Baath Party's seizure of power.

President Saddam also called on the United Nations to "keep to its commitments" on lifting the embargo. He said Iraq had fulfilled its side of the bargain and the tide of European opinion had turned in its favour.

The U.N. Security Council is due to review the sanctions again Monday.

His speech was particularly aimed at Gulf states which have signed defence and military cooperation accords with Western countries since 1990, notably the United States.

"Security guaranteed by cordial relations within the same (Arab) Nation cannot be replaced by foreign fleets," President Saddam said, adding that "protection from, and dependence on, foreign countries is a dishonour."

President Saddam warned that his offer should not be viewed as a sign of weakness. "It has become known to everybody — and I do not imagine that they (Arab rulers) do not realise — that we fear no one but the Almighty," he said.

He said the past few years had shown that all efforts to undermine his government were in vain.

"The years that have passed between 1990 and the present are enough to guide those for whom God wishes wisdom... to desist from reverting to ill will... for their overt wishes shall not be fulfilled," he said.

No conditions were set by President Saddam and he did

not say whether his government would abide by a Security Council resolution asking Baghdad to recognise Kuwait within newly demarcated borders.

Iraq says it recognises Kuwait's old borders, but senior Iraqi officials have hinted the issue could be resolved.

President Saddam said Baghdad had cooperated to "ease" the implementation of U.N. resolutions — especially those concerning Iraq's long-term disarmament.

He noted "a distinct change in Europe's attitude in general and certain (European) places in particular, where people are demanding that the U.N. keep to its pledges... with a view to a total lifting of the embargo."

The Security Council renewed sanctions in March, but was divided on the issue for the first time since they were adopted, with Russia, France, China and Brazil asking for Iraqi progress in meeting the resolutions to be recognised.

The trade sanctions have cut off Iraqi oil exports, a major source of income.

"The international attitude towards Iraq will be better



Saddam Hussein

this year," President Saddam presided, adding that hostile countries "will find themselves more and more embarrassed."

Russia and China were already involved in high-level discussions with Iraq, he said.

Despite the conciliatory tone of some of his remarks, President Saddam also devoted large tracks of his speech to attacking "the enemies... in the Arab Nation," accusing them of conspiring against "united Yemen."

That was a clear reference to Saudi Arabia and its Gulf allies, who were accused by northern forces during the two-month civil war of siding with the southern secessionists.

Two Arab diplomats remain missing in Algiers

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Two Arab ambassadors and two other foreigners were missing Sunday more than 48 hours after apparently being kidnapped in an Islamic stronghold east of the capital, press reports and diplomatic sources said.

The ambassadors from Yemen and Oman went missing in the Khemis Al Kechna area Friday lunchtime along with a member of the parliament of the Aden-based Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) and the Omani Moroccan driver, the Arab diplomatic sources said.

Earlier, officials in Algiers and Sanaa said Oman's Khalil Ben Salem Al Siyabi and Yemen's Ambassador Askar Ali Hussein had been "kidnapped" Friday.

Oman's Foreign Ministry confirmed late Saturday that its ambassador had disappeared.

The sources named the missing southern Yemeni politician as Mohammad Kacem Essour — adding fuels to reports that the still unclaimed abduction was linked via Muslim fundamentalist unrest to Yemen's recent civil war, in which Sanaa defeated the forces of the separatist south.

Algeria has been plagued by fundamentalist violence since early 1992.

The insurgency has targeted intellectuals and foreigners, including diplomats and consular agents, though up to now no actual ambassadors.

The Algerian newspaper Liberte questioned why the diplomats had risked travelling in a marked diplomatic car to an area known as a hot-bed of militant Islamists.

"The two men should not have ignored the dark reputation of that zone nicknamed death triangle," it said.

The daily Le Matin also asked why the ambassadors had travelled to an area where there had been a series of armed attacks by suspected Muslim militants, who have been battling the army-backed authorities for the past 30 months.

Some diplomats and newspapers suggested their disappearance was linked to score settling between Yemenis helped by local militants.

The independent daily El Watan speculated Sunday that the abduction might be linked to the Yemeni war, charging that the Yemeni ambassador had been a "separatist" and that Oman had supported secessionists in Aden before its fall earlier this month.

The paper said Sanaa maintained close ties with Algerian militants though a Yemeni Islamic spiritual leader, Imam Zaidani, who has made frequent visits to Algeria.

The diplomatic sources said Sunday that Mr. Essour had been a guest of the ambassador, who Sanaa earlier said had been relieved of his duties since Aden fell.

'Clinton took drugs when he was governor'

LONDON (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton was a regular consumer of cocaine and marijuana when he was governor of Arkansas, and also took part in wild parties, the Sunday Telegraph reported, quoting witnesses.

The main evidence in a "series of exclusive interviews" came from Jane Parks, 41, who lived next door to Mr. Clinton's brother Roger in Little Rock for two months in 1984. Ms. Parks told the newspaper she heard through the adjoining wall the Clinton brothers discussing the quality of marijuana or cocaine they had used. She also said that the future president received girlfriends in his brother's apartment and "some of them looked very young."

The paper said Mr. Parks' husband, a former policeman, kept a file on the activities in the apartment, which was stolen from their home last year. Two months later he was shot dead, but not before leaving copies of the file with reliable people in Little Rock, the Sunday Telegraph said.

Another witness was quoted as saying Mr. Clinton had smoked marijuana at a party in 1984 where cocaine was also circulating freely. Sally Perdue, who claimed earlier this year to have had an affair with Mr. Clinton, was quoted as saying she had seen him snorting cocaine.

Mr. Clinton has admitted smoking marijuana while studying at Oxford, England, but claimed he did not inhale and denied breaking U.S. law in the United States. The Sunday Telegraph said Mr. Clinton used drugs between 1972 and 1986, when he was a law teacher, Arkansas attorney-general and state governor. It wondered how Mr. Clinton funded his alleged cocaine habit on a "modest" salary of \$35,000.

Woman charged with abduction of baby

NOTTINGHAM, England (R) — A 22-year-old woman will appear in court Monday charged with the two-week abduction of a baby girl who was snatched from a hospital maternity ward, police said.

Two other people held for questioning in connection with the case had been released, a police spokesman said. Police Saturday returned the baby girl, Abbie Humphries, to her parents after she was found in a raid on a house near the hospital from where she was abducted.

The abduction grabbed the nation's attention as police mounted a huge operation to find Abbie after a woman dressed as a nurse snatched her just four hours after she was born on July 1.

The bogus nurse used the pretext of taking the baby for a routine hearing test. Abbie's reunion with her mother and father, Karen and Roger, was kept private at the hospital in Nottingham, central England, from where the baby was abducted. But David Edwards of the Queen's Medical Centre told a news conference: "There were smiles. People were walking on the ceiling." Hospital workers cried and hugged each other as word spread of Abbie's safe return. "I whooped for joy when I heard the news... It has been like a cloud hanging over everyone's head," said nurse Maureen Bramley. As the Humphries arrived at the hospital hoping the baby would be theirs, Det. Sgt. Mick Roberts, the officer who had been their close contact, was there to embrace them. "There aren't words to express how they feel, nor how I feel either."

Body of icebound skier recovered after 10 years

CHAMONIX, France (AFP) — The body of a skier swept to his death 10 years ago by an avalanche was uncovered in a glacier near this Alpine resort, police said Saturday.

The body of the Danish skier, who was not named, was found Friday still partly encased in the Argentiére glacier by two English cross-country skiers, the police added.

The icebound man died aged 26 in 1984 while descending a mountain corridor with another Dane, whose lifeless body was recovered at the time by rescuers.

22 suspects in subversion cases appear in court today

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Twenty-two suspects charged with membership in an illegal organisation and of plotting and carrying out sabotage with the aim of toppling the regime are expected to appear in court today (Monday) for formal pre-trial proceedings, informed sources said yesterday.

Three others — a Saudi Arabian, an Omani and a Jordanian — remain at large in one of the most serious cases of subversion reported in the Kingdom.

Expected to be unveiled in the State Security Court by the prosecution are details of how the group allegedly planned and carried out bombings at cinema theatres showing pornographic movies and a liquor store, plotted to assassinate Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali when he was head of the Jordanian peace negotiating team and considered kidnapping the child of an intelligence officer and attacking security officials.

The cinema blasts, one in downtown Amman and the other in Zarqa, injured more than a dozen people. Bombs planted at two other theatres and a supermarket selling alcohol were discovered and defused.

One of the suspects is a man who lost his legs in the Zarqa blast when the explosive device went off prematurely.

The suspects will also be charged with setting ablaze the car of a Palestinian refugee camp outside Amman. The man was known to be a supporter of the Arab-Israeli peace process launched in Spain in 1991.

The sources said the State Security Court would review the charge sheet filed by the

prosecutor against the 25, all of them men, and set a date for trial.

"It is expected that the trial would start after the judiciary's holidays which begin in August and end in September," said one source.

During today's review, the court will accept the appointment of lawyers by the suspects and arrange for state-appointed legal counsel for those who do not have the means to hire attorneys, the source told the Jordan Times.

The formal charge sheet accuses the suspects of "forming an illegal organisation, conspiring to carry out terrorist activities, illegal possession of explosives with the intent to carry out subversive actions and covering up of crimes related to national security."

The organisation is not named in the 10-page charge sheet, but many of the suspects are believed to be affiliated with the so-called Arab Afghan group — volunteers who fought alongside the Afghan mujahideen during the 1980-90 Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan.

The charge sheet says the organisation's objectives included "setting up an Islamic caliphate, fighting the infidel Arab regimes, resisting the (Arab-Israeli) peace process, using force to fight things forbidden in Islam, and fighting the Jews and Americans by striking at their interests."

If convicted, some of the suspects face the death penalty. The minimum punishment, according to the penal code, will be five years in prison.

The 22 to be produced in court were identified as prime suspects from among more than 35 rounded up between December 1993 and March 1994. Others have been released after question-

ing, the sources said.

At least two of the suspects are identified as members of the Muslim Brotherhood and some others as former members of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), the military wing of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Twenty-two of the suspects, most of them under 25, are of Palestinian origin and hail from refugee camps in Jordan.

The charge sheet mentions Osama Ben Laden, a Yemeni whose Saudi nationality has been revoked by the Riyadh government, as having indirectly financed the group at least once. However, the alleged link is not expected to be cited by the prosecution as a key factor in the case, the sources said.

Mr. Ben Laden, believed to have been a major figure in the Arab group that fought in Afghanistan, is accused by the Egyptian and Yemeni governments of financing militant Islamic groups seeking to topple them. He is believed to be living in Sudan and affiliated with the National Islamic Front of Hassan Al Tourabi, often described as the main source of support for the Sudanese government.

Reports in the British press said last month some of Mr. Ben Laden's supporters had moved to London.

Most of the "Arab Afghans" from Jordan are believed to be former supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood who broke away from the group over what they saw as "docile its approach and working in cooperation with the government instead of trying to usurp power," the sources said.

Muslim Brotherhood leaders have declined public comment on the affair.

'Copter problem cited in Kim's death

SEOUL (AP) — A helicopter accident delayed doctors summoned to treat North Korean leader Kim Il Sung after he fell ill at his country home, and he was dead by the time they arrived, a leading South Korean newspaper reported Sunday.

The account in the respected Chosun Ilbo daily contradicted statements by North Korea, which said Kim's death came despite doctors' ministrations.

Kim's last hours are shrouded in mystery. The North has said the 82-year-old leader suffered a heart attack on July 7 and died early the next morning. It did not disclose the death for another 34 hours.

The newspaper account said Kim was stricken at his villa north of Pyongyang during a late-night meeting with his son Kim Jong Il and other high-ranking officials.

Doctors were summoned, but a helicopter carrying them was delayed by an accident, the report said. Its severity and cause were not known.

It was also not known whether more doctors were summoned after the accident, said the newspaper's dispatch

from China, which cited an unidentified source who was recently in North Korea.

If true, the report that no physician was present at the villa would be odd, in light of the fact that North Korea watchers in South Korea have said that several clinics were devoted solely to maintaining Kim's health.

In the days after Kim's death, media reports in South Korea speculated obsessively about whether he died of natural causes. But none offered any evidence of foul play.

The longtime leader's death came the same day that North Korea opened high-level talks with the United States aimed at resolving the dispute over the North's nuclear intentions. And two and a half weeks before what was to have been the first summit ever of North and South's presidents.

Kim had appeared healthy three weeks before his death during meetings with former President Jimmy Carter. However, he had a history of heart trouble, and reportedly wore a pacemaker to regulate his heartbeat.

In its reports announcing Kim's death, North Korea's

official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said he "suffered from a serious myocardial infarction owing to heavy mental strains, which was followed by a heart shock."

With mourners flocking to the capital from the provinces, North Korea's state media orchestrated fever-pitch collective grief Sunday for Kim ahead of his funeral on Tuesday.

Radio Pyongyang said Sunday local communist party cadres, workers, farmers in intellectuals and People's Army officers and soldiers from the provinces visited Kim's bier at the Kumsusan Assembly Hall in Pyongyang on Saturday.

"The Korean people, feeling a gnawing ache in their hearts at the approach of the day of the last parting with the Great Leader President Kim Il-Sung, eagerly wish that a second would be as long as a thousand years," KCNA said.

The state funeral committee, led by Kim's eldest son and heir-apparent Kim Jong Il, has abruptly put off the funeral from Sunday to Tuesday, prompting speculation that he needed more time to

consolidate his power base.

It has arranged a separate mass memorial rally for Wednesday, which was expected to demonstrate the legitimacy of the junior Kim's succession to the late Kim's posts of state president and ruling party chief.

In Washington, Deputy U.S. Secretary of State Strobe Talbott dismissed the speculation, telling the CNN network overnight that "all the signals" from the North indicated the younger Kim was firmly in power.

Meanwhile, South Korean President Kim Young-Sam called a special cabinet meeting for Monday to discuss the situation in the North, officials said.

KCNA again lambasted the South Korean president on Sunday, warning that he would have to "pay dearly" for arresting a southern dissident pastor who tried to cross the Demilitarised Zone to join the mourners.

The Seoul government has banned South Koreans from responding to an offer from the North to visit Pyongyang for the funeral because the proposal was seen here as a scheme to stir unrest in the South.